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Glorney Bolton

# PEASANT AND PRINCE

*Illustrated*

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TO  
JULIAN AND HIS MOTHER



# CONTENTS

	PAGE
FOREWORD . . . . .	xi

## EXCELLENCY

### CHAPTER

I. DIVINE SERVICE . . . . .	3
II. STEADYING THE SHIP . . . . .	14
III. THE STORM BREAKS AGAIN . . . . .	25
IV. HALF-NAKED FAKIR . . . . .	37
V. REPRESSION AND REFORM . . . . .	54
VI. FIRST OF A NEW ORDER . . . . .	66

## HIS HIGHNESS

VII. A GOD AND THE CONSTITUTION . . . . .	79
VIII. THE FAITHFUL ALLY . . . . .	95
IX. A RAJPUT AND THE FAVOURITE SON . . . . .	108
X. THE DANGERS OF ELIMINATION . . . . .	123
XI. CORONATION DURBAR . . . . .	136

## GOVERNING CLASS

XII. MECCA AND NEWMARKET . . . . .	147
XIII. ARCHITECT-IN-CHIEF . . . . .	161
XIV. ON THE DEFENSIVE . . . . .	173
XV. BACK TO THE TRADER . . . . .	181
XVI. THE BRITISH DOMINATION . . . . .	194

# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	CONVICT	PAGE
XVII.	THE MARK OF A SAINT . . . . .	207
XVIII.	ROMAN CONQUEROR . . . . .	218
XIX.	PEASANT'S RAJ . . . . .	226
XX.	THE OPEN SEA . . . . .	239
XXI.	ON THE EVE OF CHANGE . . . . .	252
	MINISTER	
XXII.	WAITING UPON EVENTS . . . . .	267
XXIII.	EMERGENCE OF A NEW ORDER . . . . .	279
	GLOSSARY . . . . .	289
	INDEX . . . . .	291

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

LORD LINLITHGOW . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
THE LATE LORD READING . . . . .	20
LORD HALIFAX . . . . .	38
LORD WILLINGDON . . . . .	54
MAHARAJAH OF MYSORE . . . . .	84
MAHARAJAH OF BIKANIR . . . . .	110
SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU . . . . .	164
MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU . . . . .	240



## PEASANT AND PRINCE





## CHAPTER I

### DIVINE SERVICE

EARLY on an April morning Sassoon David stood beneath the Gateway of India and watched a speedily approaching launch in which sat the future Viceroy. He knew almost every reach of the wide harbour. His own community had helped to make Bombay a large and prosperous city, and in his house he gathered together Englishmen and Indians. He believed that it was the privilege of the Jews to interpret the East to the West and the West to the East. Between them, he believed, there should be a steady flow of trade, and often he would sit in the verandahs of Malabar Hill and gaze with an undisguised satisfaction upon the ships as they sailed into the Arabian Sea laden with merchandise.

For steady trade meant a general peace and contentment which India had not always known. In the bazaars there strolled men who could have told of service in China, in Tibet, in Afghanistan. From the wide harbour Napier sailed with his carefully chosen Sikhs for a shock invasion of Ethiopia, and those who asked whether there had been pillage in Magdala needed only to enter the Cathedral of St. Thomas in Bombay and they found a pectoral cross which was one of the trophies of the expedition, a witness to the Christian conquest of Christian. War was the traditional business of India. Whenever British policy demanded an expedition in the East, India provided the officers, the men, the money. Turkey linked her :

## EXCELLENCY

fortunes of war with Germany and the Austrian Empire, and at once Simla promised to conduct a daring campaign in Mesopotamia. Eager generals and harassed officials were busily improvising an expedition up the Tigris, and few had time to heed the complaints of the Mohammadans that they were in no mood to fight against the forces of their Caliph. For weeks on end Sassoon David, champion of the traders' peace, could have seen ships sailing towards the Persian Gulf, their merchandise replaced by men and guns.

And all too soon these ships returned southwards from Basra, and the faces of their passengers were tired and strained. There were tales of shocking ineptitude, of a desperate lack of essential supplies. With parched lips the wounded told stories of elementary neglect and muddle. Carelessness and confusion went on reaping their casualties until a distracted Cabinet agreed that while the Government of India might win a frontier skirmish it could never wage war against an army directed by superior German officers. The Mesopotamian campaign ceased to be under the control of Simla. There followed the appointment of a Royal Commission; and behind the frozen phrases of its report lurked a contempt for those methods of Simla—"a hill-top in the Himalayas"—which were "grotesque," "cumbrous and inept"; for those failures which were "persistent and continuous."

The report was an intimation to the Secretary of State for India that he should resign. Austen Chamberlain had come only recently to the India Office. He had never begun the confusion and the muddle. He lacked the time—and, indeed, the means—to put things straight. Yet he bowed to the storm. He was glad to go. Into his place came Edwin Samuel Montagu, and Sassoon David, like many others of his community,

## DIVINE SERVICE

believed that this cultured Jew would invest the hill-top administration of Simla with the imaginative strain which it lacked. Edwin Montagu had been the Under-Secretary for India when the Secretary of State was John Morley. He served his chief faithfully and well, though he understood the fateful consequences of his olympian aloofness. The biographer of Gladstone, the student of Burke and the French encyclopaedists, was destined to make India realize, even before the war, that English liberalism was exhausting its seeds of future development and accommodation. New reforms, it is true, came to India. But they came as a scheme evolved by an academic mind, as a measure sanctioned by an apathetic Parliament, as a machine still imposed by a bureaucracy. John Morley explicitly denied that he was conferring upon India the benefits of Parliamentary institutions. He knew not how to make the spirit of his beloved Burke, his Diderot, Condorcet, Voltaire quicken before the nationalist fire in India. India's Secretary of State would continue to give direction to India's Viceroys, and now the report of the Mesopotamian Commission should have destroyed for all time any illusions which Indian opinion may have had concerning the superior wisdom of Whitehall or Simla. Edwin Montagu realized the significance of the report. He believed that the circumstances demanded not only strong actions but grand gestures. He longed to succeed where his chief had failed. He would play with the nationalist fire.

He had been in office for less than a month when he persuaded a Cabinet—no longer trammelled by the party grooves—to agree that henceforward the goal of British policy in India would be “the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire.” Three months

## EXCELLENCY

later he scorned the Mediterranean minefields and sailed towards India. Officials debated anxiously whether the Viceroy, who was the King's representative, should precede the Secretary of State, from whom the Viceroy took his orders, and they shook their heads when their visiting chief greeted former convicts like Mr. Tilak and exuberant cranks like Mrs. Besant and Mr. Gandhi. Congress itself stood in peril of a visit, for Edwin Montagu longed "to dash down to the Congress and make them a great oration: it might save the whole situation."

Nor was the war-time visit the last of Edwin Montagu's gestures. When the reforms which he and Lord Chelmsford had helped to frame—reforms under which India was to be governed for more than sixteen years—were about to encounter the Parliamentary battle, Edwin Montagu persuaded a mercurial Prime Minister to confer a Peerage upon S. P. Sinha, so that an Indian might shepherd the reform through the House of Lords. He wanted Indian signatures to the Treaty of Versailles and he wanted India to be a founder member of the League of Nations. Each time, though not without a struggle, he won his way with the Cabinet.

Gratitude is never a national characteristic, and English statesmen, forgetting the ardour with which Indians entered the war against Germany, remembered only the restiveness when Mohammadan was called to fight against Mohammadan. Forgetting those outposts and garrisons in India which were almost completely deserted when the Mesopotamian campaign needed her man-power, they remembered only the increasing weariness and disillusionment as Indians came to ask each other what the Great War had to do with India. Opinion hardened. The path to peace was strewn with

## DIVINE SERVICE

awkward and sometimes conflicting promises. The Treaty of Sèvres was to follow the Treaty of Versailles, and however anxious the Mohammadans of India may have been to preserve the dignity and prestige of the Caliph, a British Cabinet could not forget that Turkey had been beaten. A Government, to be effective, must always be strong, and there is a perpetual struggle between those who would conceal its strength and those who would show it by military displays which cost an unnecessary amount of money and by legal measures which aggravate opponents, though it is seldom intended that they shall be applied. In the language of Thomas Aquinas, it is the struggle between those who believe in "political government" and those who believe in "dominative government." After the war the advocates of dominative government won several unfortunate victories. They demanded the enforcement of special measures, and the passing of the Rowlatt Acts—though they were never applied—created so many disturbances that Englishmen feared a second Mutiny. In a city charged with fear and suspicion General Dyer opened fire upon a crowd which lacked all means of escape, and when his troops retired there lay upon the ground nearly four hundred corpses and more than twelve hundred wounded people. General Dyer's action led eventually to an official condemnation. But there were debates in Parliament to show the deep divisions which his condemnation had provoked, and India, identifying the opinion of Parliament with the opinion of the country, transformed her quarrel with British methods of government into a racial quarrel with the English people. Not even Edwin Montagu's ~~flair~~ for gestures could have eased the tension between Indian and Englishman. An imaginative Secretary of State needed an imaginative Viceroy.

## EXCELLENCY

None understood better than Sassoon David this need for an imaginative Viceroy. He could recall the anger when Gladstone appointed a recent convert to the Church of Rome to succeed Lord Lytton as Viceroy. Denunciations raged from the pulpits and platforms of England, and an archdeacon might be heard to lament that India was not the country for an experimental change in the relations between Church and State. Indian onlookers were soon to learn that there was a difference in viceregal procedure, for Lord Ripon landed in Bombay and drove to the little-known Roman Catholic Cathedral which lies hidden within the meaner *bazars* of the city. He came, without ostentation, to apply the principles of Gladstonian liberalism to India's problems. He preached from the first a scrupulous toleration. He took long walks unaccompanied on the Simla hills, and a fussy official, noticing that a private shrine obtruded itself on the Viceroy's favourite walk, ordered its removal. The owner waited until he saw the Viceroy walking alone, and to him he protested against the order. That evening the official listened to a viceregal lecture on personal freedom. Lord Ripon brought with him "Chinese" Gordon as his Private Secretary, and "Chinese" Gordon stayed at Viceregal Lodge, working hard and reading his Bible, until he came sorrowfully to the conclusion that the spirit could not control the bureaucratic machinery of government, and he must leave the country.

In the end Lord Ripon himself was broken. He had sponsored the Ilbert Bill, which provided that Indian judges should try English offenders in the country districts. Indian judges were already free to try English offenders in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, and there was no reason why they should not try the mill-managers of Ahmedabad or the tea-planters of

## DIVINE SERVICE

Shillong. Yet some unconscious dread that men capable of administering the laws are capable also of initiating them drove Englishmen to display an ugly hostility. The Viceroy withdrew the Bill. He realized that Gladstone himself was not equal to his liberalism, and before his term of office was due to end he resigned. He returned with but few of his Gladstonian projects fulfilled, though he expected great things to follow from his Local Self-Government Bill, with which he had hoped to familiarize a disfranchised nation with the problems of self-government.

And, indeed, a number of Indians and Englishmen succeeded in making the Bombay Municipal Corporation a nursery for Indian statesmanship. Here laboured Pherozeshah Mehta and Dadabhai Naoroji, the first Indian to become a member of the House of Commons. Here laboured Joseph Baptista, leader of those Indians who are of Portuguese descent. Here laboured Vithal-bhai Patel, destined to be President of the Legislative Assembly. Here laboured Sassoon David, Mayor of Bombay, baronet and millionaire, and as the launch brought Rufus Isaacs to the steps of the Gateway of India, he cannot have doubted that Edwin Montagu had found the sympathetic Governor-General.

Somewhere in the 'seventies of the last century a ship's boy saw India for the first time as the *Blair Atholl* ploughed her way up the Hooghly towards Calcutta. His eye caught the city, rising mysteriously from the Bengal jungle, where Job Charnock made his first obscure settlement, where Warren Hastings wrestled with mean and grabbing colleagues, where Elijah Impey interpreted the English law to an uncomprehending and contemptuous court, where William Jones pondered over treasures in Sanskrit, where Richard Wellesley dwarfed the imperious Moghul,



## EXCELLENCY

where William Bentinck imposed his edict against the ceremonious burning of widows and Thomas Babington Macaulay made uproarious fun of "history abounding with Kings thirty feet high and reigns thirty thousand years long, and geography made up of seas of treacle and seas of butter." And soon he saw Government House, modelled as if in prophecy upon Kedleston in Derbyshire, its white steps and arrogant portico gleaming in the tropic sunlight. He may have known that Disraeli was about to make his Queen the Empress of the land and endow her with the Moghul title of Kaiser-i-Hind. When a senile Prime Minister indulged in a political fantasy—so completely detached from the actual needs of the Indian people—should a handsome boy, member of the same ancient race, set bounds to his own romance? Was it not worth all his tortuous duties in the *Blair Atholl*, the demands of a harsh and exacting captain, the jeers and kicks of a Jew-baiting crew, if the end of the journey brought him to a city where, in his mind's eye, he had become the regent of the widowed Empress, where he donned uniforms heavy with their gold brocade and presided over banquets in Wellesley's great house with a courtesy and a magnificence no other Viceroy could have shown? The story of the boy's vow—"I shall not come back to India, except as the Viceroy"—lacks any definite authority. Yet for many of his contemporaries it had the ring of truth.

For Rufus Isaacs, his spirit unbroken, returned from his ocean voyage to studies in Magdeburg, to a fitful fortune at the Stock Exchange, to the House of Commons and to a constituency so appreciative of his devotion to the Liberal cause that it begged him to take the title of Reading when he became the Lord Chief-Justice of England. Nor did the supervision of the

## DIVINE SERVICE

King's Bench exhaust his energies, for he consented to be our Ambassador in Washington, and when—in January, 1921—King George agreed that Rufus Isaacs, once the ship's boy, should go back to India and be her chief mariner and his own representative, Jewry proclaimed its delight. Isaacs outshone Disraeli at last, and Isaacs, unlike Disraeli, was a practising Jew.

As the spectators beneath the Gateway of India watched the exchange of courtesies between Sir Sassoon David and the Earl of Reading, they would have found ample assurance in the attractive smile, the charming manner, the aristocratic bearing that a strange and brilliant career had not exhausted its romance. And yet they might have asked whether a man could so invest himself with wealth, pomp and power and retain the sensitive eagerness of his youth. They might have remembered that mundane success depends upon mundane qualities, which only a cynical enchantment can redeem, and cynicism Lord Reading did not possess. They might have known that Isaacs owed none of his Parliamentary success to his eloquence and none of his achievements at the Bar to a consuming passion for social righteousness. There were incidents in his career which could not please the fastidious. There was the Marconi scandal. There was the trial of Roger Casement, when the Lord Chief-Justice of England—his manner consistently restrained, his voice unfaltering—presided over the fantastic proceedings which decided that a Statute of King Henry the Eighth condemned a shy Irishman to death for high treason. There were those farewell speeches in which Isaacs hinted that a sense of duty alone drove him back to India; and hypocrisy, if it is to succeed, should not obtrude. Had these men and women gathered beneath the Gateway lived nearer to the gossip of Westminster

## EXCELLENCY

they might have guessed that, in the appointment of the new Viceroy, the last word had not rested with a mercurial Secretary of State. The Cabinet was not concerned with the selection of a romantic figure. It sought a man with legal acumen, capable of sponsoring the new reforms.

But the need for an imaginative Viceroy persisted, and the wish was father to the thought when public eulogies in India conferred upon Lord Chelmsford's successor the grace of superior courage, wisdom and a more than natural sincerity. The times demanded a second Ripon, and now a Jew was to occupy the throne which a Roman Catholic convert had not been permitted to ascend without the knowledge that men distrusted and hated him for his faith. And the Jew had sailed almost without a protest. India did not know that a secular spirit dominated England. It was not religious humility, it was indifference, which made a Jew the representative of the King. Yet hopes were fed even at the Gateway, for, in his reply to Sassoon David, Lord Reading admitted that ancestry might enable him to see India's problems and aspirations in an intimate light. Men waited to see what the new Viceroy would do. There was no obvious or startling gesture, no outward sign of a changed religious loyalty, like Ripon's visit to the little-known Roman Catholic Cathedral. But the revelation of the Viceroy's character came soon enough. Ran the legend in the official circular from Simla: "His Excellency attended Divine Service this morning."

It was a simple thing to do. Lord Reading understood the Christian faith better than most colonial Governors who, Sunday after Sunday, drive to church with their ladies and their retinues and read the first lesson with the manly nonchalance of a head-prefect.

## DIVINE SERVICE

A Liberal-minded Jew knew what separated the Christian from the Jew and the Jew from the Mohamman. Because he was free from rancour himself, Lord Reading expected a like freedom among those who surrounded him. Lord Curzon, on the eve of his departure for India, had furnished him with a full list of what he should wear when he opened a hospital ward, what he should wear when he attended the races and what he should wear when he went to church. Lord Reading was to be the sartorial replica of the Viceroy who had waited for the cablegram announcing the Queen's death at Osborne. He would open hospital wards. He would attend the races. He would also go to church. He was free to give a liberal interpretation of the Jewish faith. He was not quite so free to offer a liberal interpretation of the Christian faith, and a chaplain who grew accustomed to preaching before the Viceroy quailed at the prospect of solemn viceregal worship on the morning of Good Friday.

So far as Lord Reading's churchgoing was a concession to official usage, very little damage was done. There were, in fact, many Erastians who approved his action. But in the greater India which stretched two thousand miles southwards from the hill-tops of Simla the damage was irreparable. Action came before faith, and so action would control faith. A country which puts sanctity before intellect, the search for truth before the acquisition of terrestrial authority, cannot forgive religious accommodation. It never forgave Lord Reading. Indians looked for the man with imagination. They found a man in whom imagination was the one thing lacking. The façade was brilliant. The eyes were hard. For five years the restless country endured a vakil's *raj*.

## CHAPTER II

### STEADYING THE SHIP

WHERE there is no burning faith a ruler must tread as warily as the angels. Certain problems before the Viceroy required delicate handling. Awkward personalities had won the multitude's applause. Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali, two garrulous brothers, feeding upon the fears and ambitions of the Mohammadan people, threatened to make a common cause between their followers and the defeated Turk. And Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, as he sat huddled half-naked before a spinning wheel, symbolized a movement which was sweeping away the older landmarks of the nationalist struggle. Many years beforehand Mr. Gandhi had made himself the leader of the Indian residents in South Africa, where some thousands of his followers, formerly indentured labourers, lived under deplorable and harsh conditions. His activities incurred the wrath of General Smuts, who openly accused him of humbug and who more than once secured his arrest and imprisonment. But in time the self-appointed Indian leader won public opinion to his side. Whereupon, General Smuts—a political realist—met Mr. Gandhi face to face and with his willing co-operation hammered out a settlement acceptable to all parties. Late in 1914 Mr. Gandhi was back in India eagerly recruiting for the Mesopotamian campaign. There followed disillusionment, and the Rowlatt Acts and Jallianwala Bagh and the steadily growing conviction that the basis and the structure and the spirit of the Government of India were "satanic." He spoke

## STEADYING THE SHIP

and the people listened gladly. He had made Mohamadan and Hindu struggle together in the days of the classical *satyagraha* movement in India. He would make them struggle together again. He sought a common policy between the two communities, and he imagined that he found it when the Mohamadan leaders were protesting that at all costs the honours and dignities of the defeated Caliph must be maintained. For the Hindu majority the Caliph had no significance, except that people who invaded their country century after century—from Mohammad Ghorī to Nadir Shah—alternately acknowledged and disputed his spiritual leadership. His religious status can have meant nothing to Mr. Gandhi, and yet the threat to his dignity offered so startling an opportunity for a Hindu and Mohamadan coalition of forces that the Mahatma adroitly argued himself out of his own religious scruples. The Mohamadan leaders had only to use his chosen weapon of *satyagraha*, and the Hindus in their turn would make the Caliph's honour a cardinal goal of their own particular struggle.

At a time less apocalyptic Mr. Gandhi and his followers would have realized that, even in India, centuries of distrust and fear cannot be bridged by a single gesture. A coalition designed to meet a particular purpose does not ensure a permanent unity. There is no short cut to communal understanding, and this Lord Reading understood so well that he soon agreed to grant interviews to Mr. Gandhi and the Ali brothers. It was through no fault in the Viceroy's ingratiating manner that each of the three men walked away from Viceregal Lodge uneasily aware that a skilful intellect was sowing dissension between them or that, as a direct result of the interviews, they renewed their preparations for massed civil disobedience.

## EXCELLENCY

And yet time seemed to favour the skilful intellect. Mr. Gandhi planned to begin a civil disobedience movement in a flourishing agricultural district called Bardoli on February 1, 1922. There were voices which demanded Mr. Gandhi's arrest. There was Lord Willingdon, Governor of Madras, whose liberal sympathies with representative institutions were helping him to make a success of the new reforms in his own Presidency. There was Lord Lloyd, Governor of Bombay, who cared deeply for the welfare of the peasant, who longed to remove the slums from Bombay, who showed his impatience with the *bourgeois* classes and who never spared his own personal authority. For the antics of Mr. Gandhi they had no use.

But Lord Reading did not order Mr. Gandhi's arrest. He waited upon events. And within four days of the inauguration of this new civil disobedience movement a crowd of three thousand men massacred twenty-two policemen at Chauri Chaura. A sorrowing Mahatma at once brought the activities in Bardoli to an end. The sequel was a storm. Time and again Mr. Gandhi had prepared for a civil disobedience movement. Time and again he called it off. The country, he would say, was not yet ripe for *satyagraha*. The Mohammadans grew restless, and intelligent men, reading that the Sinn Feiners had recently secured their Treaty from the British Government, asked each other why the issue between the Government of India and the people should not be decided by the sword. Mr. Gandhi's popularity passed under a cloud. This was the time specially chosen by the Viceroy for Mr. Gandhi's arrest. He was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

None knew better than the Viceroy that the coalition between the Hindu and Khilafatist leaders could not

## STEADYING THE SHIP

survive Mr. Gandlli's arrest and imprisonment. But it took him a longer time to disentangle himself from the Khilafatist cause. He had said, at the Gateway of India, that his ancestry gave him special sympathies with an oriental people, and, like Edwin Montagu, he interpreted these sympathies as a special understanding with people concerned for the future of the Caliph. Even before the Turkish forces retired broken and dispirited George Curzon had prepared a settlement remarkable both for its simplicity and its common sense. George Curzon would not disregard nationalism as he had disregarded it when he was Viceroy of India. He would recognize it. He would free the Arabs and the Armenians. He would also free the Turks. Thus the Anatolian peninsula would remain Turkish and exempt from Greek or French or Italian control. Turkey, in her turn, should cease to be an European power. Constantinople and the Straits should no more belong to her. The Christians had beaten her off the confines of Vienna. They would now exclude her for all time from their own Continent. George Curzon was undoubtedly right in believing that India would accept this fate as the inevitable consequence of defeat in war.

It was not, however, within the power of the Cabinet—had it even chosen to listen to George Curzon—to impose this settlement of consent except with the consent of the Allies, and France and Italy had conflicting claims. So the Allies argued and bargained and created diplomatic scenes until nervous exhaustion drove them to sign the ridiculous Treaty of Sèvres. And while the victors betrayed their exhaustion Turkey was swiftly recovering her strength. Germany and Austria were to lie prostrate and almost leaderless for nearly a decade. Turkey found that she could move



## EXCELLENCY

her stricken limbs and, like an insensitive animal, she was once more on the prowl. Her new leader, Mustapha Kemal, began by outwitting the Allies and ended by outwitting the entire Mohammadan world.; George Curzon—his early settlement utterly frustrated—opposed Mustapha Kemal's plans because he sought, once and for all, to destroy pan-Islamic forces. Edwin Montagu—sympathetic to Turkish ambitions from the beginning of his Cabinet career—sought to accommodate pan-Islamic sympathies because they were shared by Mohammadan India. It was a foregone conclusion that, sooner or later, George Curzon and Edwin Montagu should come to blows.

Week after week Edwin Montagu heard from the Viceroy the complaints of restive Mohammadan delegations which were constantly besieging Viceregal Lodge. Sympathetic messages ran between Simla and the India Office until Rufus Isaacs grew bold and publicly expressed his concern for Turkey's future. At any other time he might have relied upon the Prime Minister's support. But Mr. Lloyd George, swayed by the fierce patriotism of Eleutherios Venizelos, determined to preserve a greater Greece. The Christian would fight against the infidel. It would be an epic war. So wild rumours swept through the valleys of the Punjab, and a harassed Viceroy planned to deny the wilder rumours by publishing a statement remarkably pro-Turkish in its tone. He asked Edwin Montagu's leave for its publication, and Edwin Montagu, who knew that he was now almost the last of the Liberal colleagues in Mr. Lloyd George's Government, gave his permission without consulting the Cabinet. The blows fell at last between the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Secretary of State for India. It was Edwin Montagu who resigned.

## STEADYING THE SHIP

He quitted public life firmly convinced that he had made a last brave gesture to a generous India. There were few in England who appreciated this gesture. Even George Curzon so far forgot the splendours of the viceregal office that he could refer contemptuously to Simla as "a subordinate branch of the British Government." Mr. Lloyd George went on crusading against Mustapha Kemal until he was himself destroyed on the ramparts of Chanak. Then Mustapha Kemal—with a dictatorial ease to which Europe was still to grow accustomed—cleared away the Caliphate, and at a single blow Turkey was free from all the fetters of pan-Islamic dreams. She was no longer in subjection to oriental culture and a fatalist manner of living. She was national. She was strong. George Curzon wanted to push the frontier of the Western world into the Bosphorus. The Ataturk is pushing it towards the highlands of Iran.

At a single blow, moreover, the Khilafatist movement in India crumbled. False hopes, a discredited ideology, set at naught Mr. Gandhi's plans for Hindu and Mohammanadan unity. For two years he watched the shattering of these hopes and the growth of a sullen anger from behind the bars of Yeravda Gaol. A serious operation for appendicitis necessitated a premature release for Mr. Gandhi. But officials took comfort in the belief that Mr. Gandhi had fully exposed his own charlatanry, and indeed, his intimate followers looked in vain for a return of the lost popularity. The struggle for the Caliphate, which brought grief to Mr. Gandhi and Edwin Montagu, left Lord Reading, not only unscathed, but actually exulting in the destruction of a dangerous coalition between Hindu and Mohammanadan leaders. The Viceroy was not made for martyrdom.

## EXCELLENCY

Yet the ignominious expulsion of a friend and colleague from the Cabinet served to make the Viceroy more cautious and circumspect in his statements. For if the Indian public soon forgot an artificial agitation over the Caliphate, it found a new cause for anger in the manner in which the Europeans of Kenya treated the Indian residents. Here was a Crown colony containing nearly ten thousand Englishmen and more than twenty thousand Indians. Representative Government in such a colony meant that the Indian vote might outnumber the English vote by more than two to one, and this was a state of affairs which the English settlers would not permit. The Colonial Office, anxious to overcome the difficulty, suggested a communal electorate, wherein the Indians obtained a more limited franchise than the English. The proposal, once it was made known, excited the deepest resentment throughout India; for it implied that the doctrine of the equality of citizenship within the Empire—solemnly affirmed at the Imperial Conference of 1921—could not apply where Englishmen were in a minority. The inspiration of the British Commonwealth of Nations was—what Lord Milner had called it—a “British Race Patriotism.” In vain did the Cabinet send Mr. Edward Wood and Lord Winterton to discover an acceptable solution, for although they made the sensible proposal that the test for the franchise should be one of education and not one of race, their agreement was so whittled down that Indian opinion refused to be satisfied, and there was promptly a demand that India should boycott the elaborate British Empire Exhibition at Wembley.

When Lord Reading heard of this proposal he at once expressed his concern. The British Parliament, he told his hearers, is the guardian of the reforms in India. Those reforms were experimental. Within a few



THE LATE LORD READING *Press Portrait Bureau*



## STEADYING THE SHIP

years a Royal Commission would arrive in India and report upon the progress of the reforms. It was within the power of Parliament to take those reforms away and ordain that India shall be governed once more according to the reforms fashioned by Lord Morley and Lord Minto. Parliament in her turn was responsible to the British electors. And what would the British electors have said when they heard that Indians refused to participate in their wonderful exhibition at Wembley? It was incredible that a man should speak thus in public and not realize that, whatever the discouragements and the vicissitudes of her fortunes, India was destined to discover her own nationhood.

Yet as Mr. Gandhi submitted to a long convalescence, as the industry and commerce of India recovered their equilibrium, as a long silence followed the dissipation of the Khilafatist activities and eloquent Congressmen no longer resisted the temptation to enter the Legislatures and make their fiery speeches or play with their mock-Parliamentary tactics, it was easy to believe that India had at her helm a safe steersman. He was free, moreover, from the conceits and the fussiness of smaller men. He consented to few Ordinances, because he believed that it was wiser to administer the country according to the laws which she already possessed. George Curzon had no cause to complain that his elaborate instructions about the Viceroy's dress were not scrupulously observed. In no sense was the viceregal splendour diminished. His Excellency opened hospital wards. His Excellency attended the races. His Excellency went to church. But George Curzon might have complained, and complained bitterly, that this outwardly brilliant Viceroyalty lacked the inner personal direction. Lord Reading had no love for files or papers. He would advise. He did not care to

## EXCELLENCY

command. He gathered round him an able personnel for his Executive Council. One distinguished Indian after another added lustre to the office of Law Member. Basil Blackett went out to India, and the Viceroy covered him with praise as he strove to make Indian finance a flourishing asset. George Curzon had made himself an autocrat. To his colleagues Rufus Isaacs had no wish to appear more than *primus inter pares*.

In the plains beyond the red sandstone walls of old Delhi a new city was being built. It was costing millions after millions to complete, and often an Indian patriot would inveigh against the dishonesty of wasting the money of an impoverished country for a new capital in which members of the bureaucracy could live only for six months of the year. Money was needed desperately for roads, for schools, for infirmaries, for combating the heavy mortality among married women and for the care of the lepers who in their thousands still haunt the Indian countryside. But the voice of the patriot was not to be heeded. The building of New Delhi had begun before the war, and it was the mission of the Viceroy to subdue those passions and discontents which the war had excited. What men had begun before the war they should complete now that the war was over. The disparity between pre-war estimates and post-war expenditure could not be helped. Trade was returning. Merchants in Calcutta and Bombay greeted the Viceroy with enthusiasm. Those disquieting voices in the Congress could be disregarded.

So powerful men bade farewell to Lord Reading as he walked under the Gateway of India for the last time. A grateful monarch made him a Marquess. For a few brief weeks, after the financial crisis of August, 1931, he sat at George Curzon's desk in the Foreign Office. In his closing years he held the last of the great sine-

## STEADYING THE SHIP

cures—he was Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. Lord Chief-Justice of England, Ambassador Extraordinary in Washington, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports—more titles and honours than George Nathaniel Curzon had managed to acquire, worn with grace and dignity where Curzon would have worn them with a stilted pomposity. Yet behind the stilted pomposity there had been liveliness, passion, the heart of a spoilt, delightful child.

Did Rufus Isaacs, as he sat before the fire in his unpretentious house in Curzon Street, murmur to himself those high-sounding titles? Or did he recall the crises in his career when success depended upon the adroit manœuvre, the evasive reply, the bland smile, the courteous rejoinder? The ceremonial drives to the Chamber of Princes or the Council of State, the spectacular investitures of new rulers, the State Balls and garden parties, the barbaric ritual of a tiger hunt, how could they compare with the engaging consultations with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru or Sir Basil Blackett, the divisions artfully created between the Ali brothers and Mr. Gandhi, the legal refutation of the Nizam of Hyderabad, premier Prince of India, who had dared to question the paramountcy of the Crown?

Princes were humbled. Popular leaders lingered in gaol. Men sacrificed their freedom and their livelihoods for the sake of a new order. The party to whom Lord Reading would not listen became the dominant party. Landmarks were changed. Turkey recovered her national spirit and turned her aspirations westwards. India, for all the conflicting ideologies of Mr. Gandhi and Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, the ardent devotion of Mohammadans to the Caliphate, was following Turkey's example, sweeping away the world Lord Reading admired, the world in which the English



## EXCELLENCY

administrator could work unhindered at his files and the English business man could help to fill the ships with merchandise. Lord Reading loved peace, and there was peace in the land when the Viceregal launch bore him to the waiting liner. It was a lull in the storm.

## CHAPTER III

### THE STORM BREAKS AGAIN

A LAUNCH raced towards Ballard<sup>1</sup> Pier. A tall man climbed the steps, walked with a boyish gait across the pier and entered a car which took him swiftly through deserted streets to a little church on Malabar Hill. He was seeing India for the first time. On the morrow there would be the ceremonious arrival at the Gateway of India, the drive in state to Government House, the swearing-in of the Viceroy and Governor-General. The tall man had caused these functions to be postponed because the mail-boat in which he travelled steamed into Bombay harbour in the early hours of Good Friday, and Edward Wood—like Lord Ripon, a fellow-Yorkshireman, before him—refused to let state affairs interfere with his devotions.

He had come to a country where few were familiar with his name, and where even the name of his grandfather, the first Lord Halifax, who laid the foundations of what is euphemistically called "British education in India," had dimmed. Family patronage, it was known, secured for him adoption by an agricultural constituency in Yorkshire, where nothing short of marriage with his deceased wife's sister could have endangered his seat. He became Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, and while in that far from impressive office, he tried to find a solution to the racial problem in Kenya. He won the firm friendship of Mr. Baldwin, and he entered the Cabinet as the Minister for Agriculture. The death of his father—then well into his

## EXCELLENCY

eighties—would soon have driven him to participate in the somnolent debates of the House of Lords.

Westminster may have known how close were the sympathies between Stanley Baldwin and Edward Wood; but Indians heard of the appointment with not a little perplexity. Political instinct, which seldom deserted Stanley Baldwin before he reached the age of sixty, made him realize that no man could accept the Viceroyalty in 1926 and evade an exacting destiny. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, tentative and experimental, were not enforced without a statutory promise that a Commission would report upon their progress within that decade. Unless the new Viceroy had a marked character he could not hope to lift Conservative policy towards India out of the rut in which the majority of Conservatives were content to leave it. Whoever went to Viceregal Lodge in 1926 must have scaled a path too hazardous for those who love the party game. There was bound to be, in the one country, the discouraging mistrust of the Carlton Club, and, in the other, the unwilling obedience of a bureaucracy trained to administer in a land which, so Lord Morley insisted, was never to know Parliamentary institutions. He might succeed in replacing dominative government by civil government. But there could be no success unless the new Viceroy was prepared to work alone. Personal ambition must not corrupt his sense of duty. He should not be an unfortunate professional of politics who had to hawk his talents in the market-place.

Such a man in the political world of the middle 'twenties was not easy to find, and yet Mr. Baldwin believed that he had found him in his own colleague, a great-grandson of Lord Grey, the Whig aristocrat who sponsored the Reform Bill and saved England from a desperate struggle between the landlord and the manu-

## THE STORM BREAKS AGAIN

facturer. Lord Grey saved England and signed his political death-warrant. He bore no grudge. He retired to Howick, his ambitions forsaken. And now a great-grandson who inherited his own love of the North Country was summoned to India. Edward Wood had no wish to leave the great Yorkshire estates to which he was heir. Nevertheless, he went and his father stayed at Hickleton to wrestle with prelates, Roman and Anglican, for the unity of Christendom.

Edward Wood, now Lord Irwin, prepared to take stock of the situation which Rufus Isaacs had left with evident contentment. He was taken almost at once to see New Delhi, the city which was to represent for all time the grandeur of the British *raj*. He saw the elongated palace in which he was expected soon to be living. He saw the palace which was to be the residence of the Commander-in-Chief. He saw the Chamber of Princes, the Council of State, the Legislative Assembly. He asked to see the church. Houses, they say, have been built without staircases, and it was appreciated that Lord Irwin sought to raise money for a church from his fellow-Yorkshiremen and not from the beggared Indian taxpayer.

For a long time there was no outward change in the Viceregal demeanour. The round of festivities at Simla continued as though Congress activities in the plains below lacked all meaning. Yet Lord Irwin looked too tall and gawky for his official robes. Vice-regal Lodge managed to acquire simplicity. The flunkys remained, but they ceased to hold the floor. Lord Curzon was dead.

There were mornings when the Viceroy would leap upon a horse and ride far into the countryside. He would watch the gentle and ill-clad peasant at his work. The former Minister for Agriculture, the owner of Gar-

## EXCELLENCY

rowby and the heir of Hickleton, could not forget that the British *raj* is a peasant's *raj*. The peasant's standards, already below the standards which human dignity demand, were attacked by the falling prices for agricultural products and by a fast-increasing population. Members of the Secretariat, for all their knowledge of the baffling systems of land tenure in India, lacked revolutionary zeal. What should be done? The problem had already exacted attention from Lord Reading. Had he not tried in a speech to the Legislature to describe the balance between industry and agriculture? Speeches could effect nothing, and he fell back upon the dull expedient of recommending a Royal Commission. It was almost his last proposal. King George gave his consent, and the chairmanship fell to Lord Linlithgow.

The expedient was dull. The choice of chairman was fortunate. It was the first big appointment which had come Lord Linlithgow's way. He inherited wealth, large estates, good looks, unusual ability and a great name. His father, the first Marquess, won the affection of Arthur Balfour. He became Lord High Commissioner for the Church of Scotland. He went out to Australia to be the first Governor-General of the Commonwealth. Death struck him in middle age, and Arthur Balfour turned his attention to the son who was just entering man's estate and was in consequence to be denied his political apprenticeship in the House of Commons. Arthur Balfour, charmed by his manner and impressed by his abilities, declared that the tall lad would be a greater man than his father "if only he will work."

But the heather and the crags of Scotland were worth all the delights of London in the last years of the brief Edwardian era, and Lord Linlithgow's visits to the

## THE STORM BREAKS AGAIN

House of Lords were none too frequent. The war left him a man aged thirty-one, well matured, with the best years of his life still before him. The estates of Hoptoun, the ties of a growing and happy family, might have held him captive. It was not until after his appointment to the Royal Commission on Indian Agriculture that he had his first chance to prove his ability in a world beyond the barbed confines of social Edinburgh.

Lord Linlithgow's progress through rural India caused little stir. His humour and gaiety could shake the mustiness from a remote hill-station, for his entry into its club was like the breath of moorland air in a parched jungle. His breeziness and his freedom from any direct association with Simla led men and women to speak their minds, and while he went about his work he learned what the servants of the *raj* were thinking and what they were dreading. He discovered why their contacts with the life of India were slight. He saw them in undress, and he was to remember what he saw. And yet to acquire knowledge of English men and women in India was not his chief intention. For, whatever doubts Lord Balfour may have had, Lord Linlithgow was a hard worker. For weeks on end he and his colleagues toured the countryside. They asked endless questions. Lord Linlithgow listened patiently to evidence which was sometimes tortuous and often irrelevant. When he approved, he showed it by a significant nod of the head. And when the morning's investigations were finished, he would retire to the verandah outside his room and begin work upon the Report. Nor did he leave India until the last word of the Report had been written. He might have chosen to spend the Christmas of 1927 among the heather and crags of Hoptoun. Instead he drove up the grey road

## EXCELLENCY

which leads to Mahableshwar in the Western Ghats, and here, as the sun swept high across the heavens, he sat in the verandah of the club hard at work. There was no priggishness in this energy. There was, on the contrary, an admirable economy of effort, and when the Christmas festivities began in the Mahableshwar Club a light-hearted, lanky Scot soon showed himself to be the life and the soul of the party.

He wrote the last word and returned to England. He knew the political life of London well enough to realize that his report would receive a few polite commendations from the newspapers and be slipped without ceremony into a dusty archive. For, however anxious Lord Irwin may have been to concentrate popular attention upon the agricultural problems, Indian leaders were obsessed with political issues, so that all manners of reform, cultural, social and economic, had to remain in the background until an alternative to the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms could be found.

The lull which preceded the change of Viceroy could not have lasted. Agricultural depression was bound to react upon social life. Growing unemployment and restriction of wages in a country where economic issues are not popularly understood encouraged discontent to flow through the deep channels of communal hatred. Mr. Gandhi made a short cut to unity, but he blocked none of the familiar channels of hatred, and even his unity crumbled with the Caliphate, bequeathing nothing save a new crop of recriminations. Educated Hindus might condole with educated Mohamadans when they met each other in the smoking-room of the Chelmsford Club in Simla or the lounge of a Delhi hotel, for rioting is no weakness with educated men who happen also to be wealthy. Their commiserations could not prevail against the communal

## THE STORM BREAKS AGAIN

tension, and grave riots in Calcutta seemed to justify Lord Irwin when he chose this tension as the topic for his first important speech at the Chelmsford Club. He made an appeal for what he called "the fight for toleration." "I appeal," he said, "in the name of religion because I can appeal to nothing nobler, and because religion is the language of the soul."

It was a speech which called for lengthy comment in the daily Press, and not even the stilted language of approval from the writers of leading articles could disguise the fact that men were impressed. A new note had been struck in viceregal speeches. Henceforward the personality of the Viceroy was to take a more definite shape in the mind of the Indian legislators. The speech was a gesture. It needed a stronger backing if better relations between the two communities were to prevail. "The fight for toleration" was hard because resentments driven underground by the firm dominative government of Lord Reading sought a release. It so happened that Lord Irwin, in his anxiety to promote a friendlier spirit, took the very step which was to provoke the storm. He believed that the Statutory Commission to report on Indian reform, which was in any event to be appointed before his Viceroyalty came to an end, should be expedited. He began informal conversations with Lord Birkenhead, who was his Secretary of State, and with his Prime Minister, and he had no great difficulty in winning his way. Before the monsoon came to an end in 1927 Indian legislators knew that preparations were already far advanced, and they were too intelligent not to realize that the Statutory Commission would have an exclusively Parliamentary membership. There would be members of the House of Lords and members of the House of Commons. There would be members



## EXCELLENCY

of the three major political parties. There would not be a single Indian.

None in England foresaw the storm. The House of Lords as it listened to the last of Lord Birkenhead's greater speeches, in which he announced the appointment of Sir John Simon and six Parliamentary colleagues to be members of the Statutory Commission, did not imagine that any reasonable person could defy its relentless argument, its faultless logic, its inevitable conviction. It was true that the constitutional right to extend or restrict reform in India belonged to Parliament. It was true that the Viceroy was responsible to the Secretary of State and that the Secretary of State was responsible to Parliament. It was true that Parliament had promised to appoint a Statutory Commission, whose membership was to be exclusively Parliamentary, within ten years of the inauguration of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. It was true that in appointing a Commission at an earlier date than the law demanded, in making its membership representative of the party in office and the opposition, in inviting a committee chosen from members of the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly to express the views of the Indian legislators, and in promising that the Report should bear the scrutiny of a Joint Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament, the British Government showed sympathy and generosity. But it was also true that the British Government was free to reject that advice offered by the Indian legislators and to impose new reforms, whether or not they commanded the approval of the Indian people. Reform depended upon the good behaviour of the Indian people, the goodwill of the Statutory Commission and the good intentions of the British Government. In politics goodness reaps no reward. The Indian

## THE STORM BREAKS AGAIN

legislators were asked to believe that good behaviour and good arguments would compel the British Government to confer self-government and defy the prejudices of the reactionary, the clamour of vested interests, the fixed bureaucratic notions of Whitehall, and the stubborn assurance, which George Curzon was by no means the last Viceroy to express, that God wanted his Englishman to go on governing the Indian.

The Indian legislators refused to believe anything so silly. They knew the power of discontent. They followed the logic of obstruction. They understood the persuasion of asking for more than they expected to get. The lessons of the struggle which preceded, and was to follow, the establishment of the Irish Free State were not forgotten. If London could not govern a country less than four hundred miles away she could not govern a country which nearly a quarter of the globe separated from her. Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus and Aden no more assured a British sway over the hearts of Indians than an uninterrupted ocean linked the American colonies to the Cabinets of King George the Third. There were constitutional arguments for Lord North. The telegram, wireless, speedy liners might promote an accessibility unknown to the English who laboured in India before the Mutiny. Those inventions which narrowed the distance between London and Bombay also narrowed the distance between Bombay and Calcutta, between Cape Comorin and the walled city of Peshawar, creating the nationhood which, so the critics argued, had not hitherto existed. Lord Reading, even Lord Birkenhead in his brilliant speech, could argue that the Report was free to advocate a return to the Morley-Minto reforms and so destroy all the seeds of Parliamentary government which Edwin Montagu had tried to plant. But the Indian leaders themselves

## EXCELLENCY

were conscious of new powers. They realized that the fiscal autonomy which the British Government had already conceded to the Simla administration could become a fiscal autonomy manipulated according to the wishes of a responsible Indian Legislature. They realized that the future could give them command over India's trade; and without the stimulus of trade no British *raj* would have been established. It was not difficult for the wealthy barristers who were the brain-trust of the Liberal party to foresee a future when they would hold the chief seats in the Government and the Judicature. Nor was it difficult for wealthy merchants in Calcutta or bankers in Bombay to foresee a future in which they were the sole representatives of big business and high finance in their own country. The masses could not be coerced into buying British goods, and Mr. Gandhi was finding that their pathetic contentment could be easily disturbed.

Lord Reading believed that by sending Mr. Gandhi to prison he had rid India of a dangerous fanatic. For long it seemed that he had been right. Men appeared to forget him. C. R. Das, a Bengali leader, grew impatient with non-co-operation and took his Congress colleagues into the Legislative Assembly. And there he found that a Front Bench of Englishmen was no match for the wiry dialecticians of the Congress party. Parliamentary institutions were a new game, and just as the cure for irresponsibility is responsibility, so the cure for a Parliamentary institution, from which certain topics of discussion were withheld, was an institution completely Parliamentary, a Front Bench whose occupants were not highly-paid bureaucrats, but Ministers belonging to the popular party of the day and responsible to the Legislature for their actions. The steel frame of the administration, in fact, was giving way.

## THE STORM BREAKS AGAIN

No strategy and stubbornness alike demanded a boycott of the Simon Commission. Lord Irwin interviewed leader after leader and in vain he pleaded the "fight for toleration." Sir John Simon and his colleagues arrived in Bombay—in February, 1928—and tried to create sympathy and understanding. It was a hopeless task. True, the boycott was far from complete. Few Mohammadan leaders refrained from co-operation. The Council of State co-operated, and so did several of the provincial Legislatures. But they knew, even as they co-operated, that other forces were at work, and that the architects of the future reforms would be Indians and not members of the ill-fated Simon Commission. There was, to begin with, the unfortunate challenge in Lord Birkenhead's great speech. He invited the leaders of all parties in India to meet and to prepare their own Constitution. He never for one moment anticipated that the challenge would be taken up. There was an all-party Conference, none the less, and it appointed a Committee to prepare a Constitutional report. Pandit Motilal Nehru led this committee, and he had valuable help from Lord Reading's Law Member, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. The result was the Nehru Report. It envisaged a unitary Government and the disappearance of the separate electorate for the religious minorities. It was, therefore, unacceptable to the Mohammadan communities. But while envisaging a unitary Government, it discussed the prospects of a Federation between the Provinces and the Princes; and for the first time the policy of the Princes and the policy of the Congress appeared to coincide.

Hitherto, the Englishman believed that the Indian Prince was the inflexible supporter of the British *raj*. It did not occur to him that a single Prince objected to

## EXCELLENCY

Queen Victoria's title of the Empress of India or that any of them had travelled reluctantly to Delhi for the Coronation Durbars of King Edward and King George. He had watched the agitations of Mr. Gandhi and the Congress leaders and forgot that extremes find common sympathies and that racial discrimination in Kenya would find as much resentment in a Maharajah's palace as in Congress House. If the aloofness of the bureaucrat with his files irritated the middle classes, a Maharajah and his personal staff could resent the attentions of a polite, bland and yet frankly inquisitive English Resident. Princes longed for deliverance, and men trained in constitutional law—chief among them Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru—were not slow to point the way to deliverance. Thus the idea of Federation took shape. Sir John Simon's Commission envisaged a unitary Government. Its terms of reference did not permit consultations with the Indian Princes, and long before he set pen to paper Sir John Simon knew that his report would never gain acceptance. It was published in the summer of 1930 and fell dead from the press.

## CHAPTER IV

### HALF-NAKED FAKIR

A VICEROY does not himself initiate all the measures of his own Government. He has, across the waters, a Secretary of State who listens to the Council of India and knowledgeable Under-Secretaries before he can concern himself with the views of the Cabinet and the members of Parliament. He has, in the bungalows around Viceregal Lodge, an Executive Council, a Commander-in-Chief, the Secretariat, the legislators. In moments of weakness he could rely completely upon his Executive Council and allow the Government of India to drift from storm to calm and from calm to a storm more destructive and more decisive than the Indian mutiny. But Lord Irwin was never weak. More than half his troubles with the Legislative Assembly were due to the introduction of measures designed to safeguard law and order. He imposed more Ordinances than any of his predecessors. But he believed firmly that government without the consent of the governed, though it might succeed for a time, was bound to end in tragedy. Civil government was healthier than dominative government, whatever the risks to prestige or bureaucratic efficiency.

Lord Irwin did not hesitate when he saw the path of duty. There should be no drift. He would find the basis of an All-India consent. He understood the restlessness of the Princes and the turbulences of debate in the Legislative Assembly. Week after week the

## EXCELLENCY

President of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Vitalbhai Patel, would call on him and explain his difficulties. Mr. Patel was an old man who loved intrigue. He exalted his office. He was the speaker of India's House of Commons. He was, therefore, impartial and above all criticism. There is no doubt that he sincerely believed that, as a Speaker jealous for his rights, he was enhancing the dignity and securing the independence of his House of Commons. There is also no doubt that his heart was with the destructionists. They were winning their way. They exposed the hollow pretensions of dyarchy. They proved that the Parliament of India, if India was to have a Parliament, must be a body responsible to the electorate and that the future Government of India must be responsible, in its turn, to the Indian Parliament. It was because the Viceroy believed in this Parliamentary destiny that he refrained from calling the bluff of the wily President of the Legislative Assembly.

These Parliamentarians needed a goal. More than ten years had elapsed since Edwin Montagu persuaded a war-time government to declare that the goal of British policy was "the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire." A Tory Viceroy now saw that such a declaration was not enough. At the beginning of the decade Indians were demanding Dominion status. Before its close Lord Irwin convinced himself that, unless the British Government boldly declared for Dominion status, the advocates of complete Independence would sweep the political field. At the beginning of Lord Reading's Viceroyalty Mr. Gandhi agitated for a Round Table Conference—"a real Conference, where only equals are to sit and there is not a single beggar." Lord Reading's successor came to realize that without



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a Round Table Conference the political difficulties of the country could never be resolved.

However arduous may have been the task of winning official support from India, the prospects of support from England were more complicated. Lord Birkenhead was completely enchanted by the argument, the logic and the conviction of his own great speech in the autumn of 1927. He adopted the easy and popular attitude that India was a country in which nothing could be done until Sir John Simon had published his report, and as Sir John Simon has a polished style there was a general hope that he would require a long time to finish it. Lord Birkenhead had fallen a victim to the mysterious seductions of the City, but his attitude to India remained the attitude of most other Conservatives, and Lord Irwin's task of reconciliation might have ended in failure but for the defeat of his own party at the polls.

In 1929, for the second time in his career, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald became the Prime Minister. It was eighteen years since he had been elected President of the Indian National Congress—an office which his wife's death prevented him from holding. Though there were to be many diversions in the long journey from Lossiemouth to Londonderry House, Mr. MacDonald retained a fatherly affection for India. His period of office was likely to be short. If any achievement was to distinguish the career of his second administration, it should be the new Indian reforms. Within a few weeks Lord Irwin, leaving Lord Goschen to hold the fort in Simla, was on his way to London to plead for a Round Table Conference and to gain authority for a statement that the goal of British policy in India was Dominion Status. From Mr. MacDonald and from Mr. Wedgwood Benn, the new Secretary of

## EXCELLENCY

State, he won speedy promises of support: Not content with the approval of the Labour Government Lord Irwin communicated with his old chief, and from Aix-les-Bains Mr. Baldwin puffed a provisional consent.

In India there was a general atmosphere of expectancy. Lord Irwin had gone to London to make his pleas in person. • He returned to India, the personal embodiment of a liberal principle at work in the administration, and there was the prospect that he would stand alone. Within a week of his return Lord Irwin announced his plans. On October 31, 1929, India heard for the first time that Dominion Status was the goal of British policy in India, and that next year the Princes and the leaders of all the Indian parties would be invited to a Round Table Conference. The response was swift. The Princes accepted. The Liberals were enthusiastic. Congress itself was impressed and took its time before it gave a definite answer. There is no doubt that Lord Irwin wanted, and even expected, a response from the Indian National Congress. No one with any sense of political realities could dispute the fact that Congress possessed the youth, the ardour and the leadership. Slowly but surely—perhaps, through jealousies and rivalries and the failure of abler men to stand the test of public scrutiny—the leadership of the Indian National Congress fell to the man whom Lord Reading had packed off to Yeravda Gaol when his popularity was passing through a cloud. Mr. Gandhi may have earned the distrust of the intellectuals, for he refused to profit from the example of the Sinn Fein leaders or to admit the hard constructive work of the Russian Soviet. He earned their distrust because he in turn distrusted force and intelligence. But he was the first modern leader ever to obtain a large backing from the peasants in India. Here his influence was in-

calculable. It did not depend upon mere numbers, though in numbers alone there was no other leader who could pretend to compete with him. He came, nearer than any other Indian has ever come, to be the personal symbol of India. It was the reward of sanctity:

Lord Irwin was prepared to make great sacrifices in order to secure the support of the saint of India. A Mahatma at the Conference table with a Labour Prime Minister, the Princes, the Liberals, the leaders of the Mohammadans, the Sikhs, the Parsis, the Europeans of India, the Untouchables: such a Conference could not fail to be fully representative of the rulers and peoples of India, and for long Mr. Gandhi toyed with the prospects of participation. Other ambitions held him back. From the moment that he agreed to go to London, he would lose all the support of the extremists who advocated a complete independence. They would leave the Congress camp—probably in large numbers—and free their minds from the tyranny of passive resistance. They would take the sword. It was a crisis which, above all others, Mr. Gandhi sought to avoid. He believed passionately in the efficacy of *satyagraha*, so weakly translated as “soul force.” It had worked before. It would work again. He had only to agree to go to the Conference and bloodshed was certain. He had only to refuse and he might succeed in holding all the opposition forces—the bitter, virile, revolutionary forces—under the sway of *satyagraha*.

The temptation to refuse to go to the Conference was in itself overwhelmingly strong. There was yet the powerful factor of obstruction. Indians had won two important concessions already by a vigorous boycott of the Simon Commission. They had won far more than loyal co-operation could have secured for them, and what was true about their boycott of the Simon Com-

## EXCELLENCY

mission might be true also of their boycott of the Round Table Conference. Princes and Liberals would speak in the stately drawing-rooms of St. James's Palace. It would be the boycott of British goods and the nation-wide obstruction to the machinery of government which gave their words urgency and point. The wonder is that Lord Irwin believed, until the actual morning when Mr. Gandhi gave his answer, that the Congress leaders would go to the Conference.

The Mahatma's refusal to participate exposed Lord Irwin to angry attacks in the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The Conservatives were now the Opposition and unwilling to remember that the Viceroy whom Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Wedgwood Benn praised so warmly had been one of the chief ornaments of their party. Lord Irwin had destroyed the Simon Report even before it was written: he had committed the British Government and its successors to a policy of Dominion Status for India: he had summoned a Round Table Conference for the doubtful advantage of bringing Congress leaders to London. He failed even in his object, and in politics failure is not forgiven. Time and again Cabinet Ministers rose in the House of Lords or the House of Commons to defend the Tory Viceroy against his Tory assailants. They did it with so little spirit and with so much absence of conviction that their speeches, scanned by an excited public in the Indian cities, read like apologies. Intellectual Socialists who went with their strange new titles to the House of Lords could not perform the double feat of impressing both backwoods Peers and Indian Congressmen. Unable to impress both, they preferred to impress their Peers. Their difficulties were symptomatic of the intolerable conditions which prevailed when a Parliament dependent upon the votes

## HALF-NAKED FAKIR

of the populace assumed responsibility for a country six thousand miles away. Whitehall administration for India was as archaic as the *ancien régime* before the storming of the Bastille.

Lord Irwin trod the path of destiny. He did not shirk the difficult ascent, but as the winter of 1930 gave place to spring, the chances of success were slighter, the dangers of defeat more menacing. Mr. Gandhi made up his mind to offer *satyagraha* on the grand scale. He chose to begin his operations by an attack on the salt laws. Salt is used by the peasant to flavour his unappetizing food. A tax upon salt is thus a tax upon the commodities of the poor. It was never a popular tax, but it was sanctioned by Moghul practice and the Government of India had not brought it to an end, though salt may be found on the shores of the Arabian Sea. It was to these shores that Mr. Gandhi proposed to march, so that he might manufacture illicit salt. At once officials were perplexed. Some wished him to be arrested. Others urged that he should be permitted to make himself a fool before the Government made him a convict, and one of them was credited with the notion that a regimental band should accompany Mr. Gandhi on his march and strike a martial air as soon as he began to address the multitude. Nevertheless, the march began, and after several days on the dusty roads of Gujerat Mr. Gandhi reached Dandi, where he waded into the sharkless sea with a bucket. He returned, his bucket filled with sea-water. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, an ageless Girton girl, cried: "Hail, Deliverer," and the bucket was placed over the fire. The water boiled and was cooled. Sediment lay at the bottom of the bucket. Mr. Gandhi called the sediment salt. It seems to have been his chief injury to the cause of truth.

## EXCELLENCY

And yet Mr. Gandhi failed, as he had failed so often before, to make himself a fool. The Government gave him his rope, and he did not hang. Arrests were made all over the country, and it was soon intolerable that men and women should be cast into prison while their spokesman chatted garrulously to all who came his way. Within two months he was back in Yeravda Gaol with no charge against him. He was not a convict. He was a *détenu*. An Act already more than a century old permitted his incarceration without trial; and in gaol he stayed while English merchants faced the most severe boycott they were ever likely to experience, while Pathans fought against their dagger-lust and chubby youths refrained from tears as the *lathis* of angry policemen beat against their skulls. The strength of the *satyagraha* movement, it was said, could be numbered by the men and women who were prepared to suffer imprisonment. It was soon evident that not all the prisons of British India could contain the men and women impatient to be convicts. And Englishmen, confronted with this sacrificial energy, respected it. They saw the weakness of their position, the injustice of measures which in the past they had accepted. A devoted member of the Indian Civil Service exclaimed that, if thirty years ago he and his contemporaries had foreseen the day when they would sentence men and women for the honourable offence of patriotism, they would not have joined the service.

The building of New Delhi was completed. The day for its official inauguration drew near. Lord Hardinge, who had originated the idea of a new Imperial capital when he was Viceroy before the war, voyaged to India in his old age to witness the ceremony. But few who were living through the eventful years of Lord Irwin's Viceroyalty cared for elaborate pageantry. The Duke

## HALF-NAKED FAKIR

of Gloucester was on his way to Addis Ababa to represent the King of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Emperor of India, at the Coronation of Ras Taffari, Lion of Judah, King of Kings, Emperor of Ethiopia. Memories of Napier's expedition were forgotten: the pectoral cross which once stood in Bombay Cathedral as a trophy of war had been ceremoniously returned to Magdala during the Great War. The most revered monarch in the modern world sent his son to salute the oldest monarchy in Christendom. It was a kingly gesture; an assurance, perhaps, that monarchy was meant to withstand all the assaults of alien ideas and alien people. But no one ever suggested that the Duke of Gloucester, after his return to Jibuti, should sail across the Arabian Sea and inaugurate the Emperor of India's capital city. The day for grandiloquent actions had gone. Mr. Gandhi's apostolic simplicity triumphed where cumbrous ostentation failed. Lord Irwin dutifully took up his residence in the enormous palace. He never pretended that it was as good as Garrowby.

Englishmen were by no means alone in responding to the shock of this national determination. Princes, Mohammadans, Sikhs, Liberals, Europeans, Parsis, an Anglo-Indian and an Untouchable had sailed from India for the Round Table Conference which Lord Irwin promised for them. They represented every party in India—save one. And that one party, which knew for certain that its adherents numbered millions and which, in consequence, influenced more than half the Indian Press, declared emphatically that it would ignore the Round Table Conference. The Princes, the Mohammadans, the Sikhs, the Liberals, the Europeans, the Parsis, the Anglo-Indian and the Untouchable could not afford to be ignored. They shunned ridicule. They could not leave London empty-handed. Their



## EXCELLENCY,

sympathies, moreover, were never completely estranged from their opponents. An eminent lawyer might be impatient with the *khaddar* economics of Mr. Gandhi and declare his admiration for British constitutional methods with a disarming frankness, but, as he sat at the Conference table and allowed his thoughts to wander, he would dread the cablegram which announced that a beloved daughter or grandson—perhaps even his wife—had become an inmate of a crowded gaol. Not a single Indian delegate was altogether free from that fear. Something had to be accomplished at the Round Table Conference. Otherwise India's leading party would swiftly become her only party, and the British would have to choose between the alternatives of governing the country by undisguised force or making a Treaty with the Congress leaders, and with the Congress leaders alone. Many Congressmen anticipated this clear-cut situation. They had not misread the history of the Irish Treaty.

Under the pressure of momentous issues the delegates in London sought unanimity. They belonged to a country where the ruling class—whether Moghul or English—had always known the value of playing off one community against another. They belonged to a country where antipathies had racial as well as caste and religious origins. Unanimity was almost impossible. And yet the determination to return to their suffering country with something accomplished created the unanimity. Projects which for years had been among the dreams of Indian reformers gained a sudden adherence. The Princes and the spokesmen of British India forgot their rivalries and envisaged a country in which the States and the Provinces were partners. Federation took shape. The Provinces, like the States, were to be autonomous. The British Govern-

## HALF-NAKED FAKIR

ment, while transferring most of its authority, was to retain certain safeguards during a period of transition, provided that none of them were detrimental to the welfare of India. Federation, a responsible Legislature, provincial autonomy, safeguards: these were the central props of the new reforms. Englishmen and Indians might argue about the details of the new reforms for the next five years and longer. The props remained.

And Congressmen soon found that the Round Table Conference could not be ignored. The delegates, whether or not they represented a congerie of minorities, had made the cause of reform intelligent. Hitherto, Congressmen had argued whether they stood for Dominion Status or Independence. They ignored the practical issues: should the future Government of India be unitary or federal: who should defend India by land or sea: should there be a complete repudiation of external indebtedness? The delegates had now given a new direction to political thought. The time came for a halt in their deliberations, and they left London in the early days of 1931 resolved to win support from their Congress opponents. As the liner steamed across the Arabian Sea they concocted a manifesto which was intended to procure a general consent. For was it not possible that when they made a monotonous return journey in the autumn for the second session of the Round Table Conference, the delegates would bring with them representatives of the Congress—perhaps, Mr. Gandhi himself?

This question Lord Irwin was constantly asking himself as soon as he realized the unexpected success of the first session of the Round Table Conference. Before the liner sailed into Bombay harbour, the Viceroy's mind was made up. He ordered the un-

## EXCELLENCY,

conditional release of Mr. Gandhi and all other members of the Congress Working Committee. Mr. Gandhi walked out of Yeravda Gaol and found civil disobedience still in action. He saw fashionable ladies—their silks discarded for homespun *khaddar*—picketing outside the English shops. He met in Bombay English business men whose numbers had been reduced by the virulence of the boycott and who sadly admitted that it was not possible to compel a people to buy British goods against their will. He conversed with the delegates from London, and he knew not how he should accept Federation, provincial autonomy and safeguards. How did they fit into the conservative demand for Dominion Status and the advanced demand for Independence? Ought he to continue to promote civil disobedience now that so many of his followers were obviously impressed by what had been accomplished in London? In the long-run men fight for realities, not for phrases. The delegates had successfully challenged the old ideological ascendancy of the Congress. Their success undermined the Congress struggle, and Mr. Gandhi was left to discover how he could call off the *satyagraha* movement and retain the confidence of the millions whom he represented. A Conference with the Viceroy seemed the way of escape.

To this Conference Lord Irwin agreed. He had provoked the keenest displeasure in certain circles by his release of Mr. Gandhi and the Congress Working Committee, for some distinguished police officers were confident that within a few weeks the *satyagraha* movement would have been broken. The provincial Governors took train to Delhi and exacted from Lord Irwin a promise that the conduct of the police in a trying period should not be subjected to a special enquiry. Soon Mr. Gandhi made the journey to New Delhi and

Mr. Winston Churchill voiced a deep disgust that a half-naked fakir could stride up the steps of the Viceroy's palace and confer on equal terms with the representative of the King-Emperor. Was it for such an episode as this that the English, spending some millions of the Indian taxpayers' money, designed and built New Delhi? Day after day Mr. Gandhi called, and often he saw Lord Irwin alone. The two men discussed every issue which divided the Englishman from the Indian. They liked each other and—since they had pursued the same goal, though by different means—they more than half agreed with each other. Lord Irwin saw the sense of *swadeshi*, for he believed that the purchase of Indian goods in India was as reasonable as any "Buy British" campaign in England. In turn, he made Mr. Gandhi see the sense of Federation, provincial autonomy and safeguards. He persuaded him, in fact, that the work done at the Round Table Conference was good. He even convinced him that the salt tax, against which he thundered, could not be repealed without grave danger to India's exchequer. The Working Committee, never far from the boundaries of Imperial Delhi, grew restive, for it feared that the leader, whose mind is feminine and masochistic, would surrender himself to the King-Emperor's representative. Lord Irwin had to answer for the administration. He was responsible to the Secretary of State and to Parliament. Like the greatest of his predecessors, Warren Hastings, he ran the risk of impeachment. Mr. Gandhi could ignore his Working Committee and appeal to the masses. He could appeal, moreover, in sentiment, for it was national feeling, and not national opinion, which had made him strong. In despair, the Working Committee urged Mr. Gandhi to demand an enquiry into the conduct of the

## EXCELLENCY

police. Excesses, its members were certain, had been committed.

And this demand Lord Irwin refused. He had promised the provincial Governors that the enquiry should not be held. He was not going back on his word. So there came a deadlock in the conversations upon which Lord Irwin had staked everything. He had lost many of his political friends. He had only to fail in these conversations and he would retire to Garrowby, a discredited figure. He would spend his last days in political neglect, like his great-grandfather at Howick. Between failure and success, between the contempt of Parliament and the magnificent prospect that British and Indian policy could be brought into line with each other, between the continuance of civil disobedience and the resumption of a Round Table Conference fully representative of all parties in India stood the record of the police and an obstinate little *bania*. It was the *bania* who gave way.

The Viceroy and the Mahatma signed the Delhi Pact, and Mr. Gandhi walked away, having committed the largest party in the British Empire to Federation, a responsible Legislature, provincial autonomy, safeguards; to co-operation in the work of the Round Table Conference; to a continuance of the detested salt tax; to a cessation of the civil disobedience movement. Lord Irwin, as he watched the shawled figure trip down the corridor, knew that he had promised to release several thousands of prisoners who would be in no mood to break a truce, and that he had sanctioned a *swadeshi* movement in a country where people would never buy foreign goods against their will. He knew that, even according to the terms of the Delhi Pact, he had won far more than he lost. He knew also that the burden of fashioning the future reforms of India rested with the

## HALF-NAKED FAKIR

Congress delegates and the delegates of all other parties who would re-assemble in London in the autumn for a new session of the Round Table Conference. He had lifted Conservative policy out of the rut. His tactics were often at fault. His strategy was thoroughly planned. His generalship was sure.

Within a few weeks his Viceroyalty came to an end. There was the customary round of farewells in Delhi. There were the official addresses. More than a hundred young Englishmen in Bombay, anxious that appreciation should be genuine, gave their signatures to a letter which acknowledged the Viceroy's courage. When he was charged with weakness, the young men wrote, the Viceroy ignored the charge with the quiet dignity of which strong men alone are capable. Though by no means all of them were Conservatives, they were united in the hope that the opportunity would soon come to him to render yet again distinguished service to his country and his Empire. Their letter was delivered to him as the Viceregal train sped in April heat over the heights of the Aravallis to Bombay.

From a friendly monarch Lord Irwin received the Garter. From the Conservative party he expected, and received, no gratitude. He returned to Garrowby, to a patriarchal parent still bullying the Bishops about Church Union, to the Mastership of the Bramham Moor Hunt. The newspapers soon forgot to be vindictive. For, in that fateful summer of 1931, the world order received one of its most serious shocks, and Mr. Baldwin hurried away from Aix-les-Bains in anticipation of a crisis beyond the powers of a minority Government to surmount. The delegates left India in the middle of August, but as their ship sailed through the Suez Canal they heard that Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Baldwin were in the same Cabinet, and that Sir

## EXCELLENCY

Samuel Hoare—hitherto a querulous Conservative delegate at the Conference—had succeeded the amiable and well-intentioned Mr. Wedgwood Benn as the Secretary of State for India.

In a Government of all the talents there was no immediate room for Lord Irwin. But he entered the Cabinet later as the Minister for Education. He succeeded to his father's title and estates, and in a Government reshuffle Mr. Baldwin made him the Lord Privy Seal. Not one Englishman in a hundred knows that Halifax the Lord Privy Seal was Irwin the Viceroy, and among those who know many do not care: so transient are popular esteem and popular execration, and so allied. Behind the scenes Lord Halifax continues to play a vital part in the destinies of Britain. He is Mr. Baldwin's closest friend, and he represents his friend's views with the utmost fidelity and often with the utmost conviction in the House of Lords. It is uncertain whether he will care to remain in public life once Mr. Baldwin has ceased to be the Prime Minister. Men who knew the boldness of his work in India, his undisputed leadership, have wondered how he has endured the heavy-footed progress of Mr. Baldwin's last administration. Has the lack of ambition become a studied detachment? Is the dutiful lieutenant waiting to lead? Or have the years of misunderstanding and conflict in India taken their toll? Men grow old. Nearly fifty years separated Reading the Viceroy from Rufus Isaacs the ship's boy, and it is possible that if Rufus Isaacs, like Edward Wood, had become the Viceroy in his middle forties India would have seen some dreams of the ship's boy fulfilled. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald looked for a successor to Lord Irwin. He could have searched in his own party. He could have found a man willing to represent the King-Emperor

### HALF-NAKED FAKIR

without undue ostentation, without a *Peerage*, without ample private means. He could have found a man simple but dignified, level-headed but youthful and energetic. He could have chosen a man in his prime, like George Curzon and Edward Wood. But England plays for safety, and Mr. MacDonald found a successor in the retiring Governor-General of Canada, a man fast approaching his threescore years and ten.



## CHAPTER V

### REPENTANCE AND REFORM

IT was an April morning in 1931 when the Earl of Willingdon stood beneath the Gateway of India and smilingly acknowledged his friends and acquaintances. For there were many spectators who remembered Freeman Freeman-Thomas, the son-in-law of Lord Brassey and the Liberal member for Hastings, when he forsook his Parliamentary career to become Governor of Bombay. There soon followed trying days when Englishmen left their offices to participate in the Mesopotamian campaign and Englishwomen helped to nurse the wounded, to entertain, to run garden parties, to create the illusion that war has no terrors for a brave race. In these circumstances Lord Willingdon and his wife showed to great advantage. Lord Willingdon treated every Englishman he met as a fellow-Etonian, and so he got on admirably with the English community. He was, in fact, ideally married. He should have been born a prince.

Week after week in the cold weather the Governor and his lady used to follow hounds across the paddy-fields of Salsette, and after the kill they rode back to the Jackal Club for breakfast, where they would radiate charm and little frivolous understandings, so that the hunting set, flattered by flirtations from Government House, voted that Lord Willingdon and his wife were the most delightful representatives of the remote King-Emperor that Bombay could have hoped to have. Social grace was undoubtedly Lord Willingdon's chief



LORD WILLINGTON

*Embley*



## REPRESSION AND REFORM

asset, and with social grace he tried to achieve a revolution: for he treated every Indian he met as a fellow-Etonian also.

There was no doubt about his sincerity. He could drive from Government House to the Yacht Club and hear the band playing on the harbour terrace, provided he brought no Indian with him. He could walk from his spacious house on the Western Ghats to the Mahableshwar Club, provided that his Indian guests—whether they were the Maharajah of Bikanir, whose signature is appended to the Treaty of Versailles, or the Maharajah of Kolhapur, whose Mahratta ancestors were the lords of the Western Ghats—remained at Government House. The exclusion of Indians from an English Club might have been a trifling affair, like the virtual exclusion of the Archbishop of Canterbury from the Jockey Club, but it was symptomatic of racial exclusion and thus it was legitimately resented.

So the Governor set himself the task of founding a new club, open to Englishmen and Indians alike. He determined that it should be the best club in Bombay, and he had the enthusiastic support of Sir Stanley Reed, the able Editor of the *Times of India*. Thus the Willingdon Sports Club came into existence. The membership fees and the entrance fees were so expensive that there could be no doubt about the exclusiveness of the club. Few of the younger Englishmen could afford to join, and in the formative years of Lord Irwin's Viceroyalty there was no club where the young men of India, imbued with revolutionary traditions, could meet the post-war, impressionable Englishman who was among the first to realize the gravity of Lord Irwin's task. The social advantages of the Willingdon Sports Club were, in fact, appreciated by Englishmen and Indians who were ceasing in any active sense to be

sportsmen at all. But Lord Willingdon was not to foresee the events of Lord Irwin's Viceroyalty, still less the events of a world beyond India, and none cared to deride the Governor's genteel pioneering. When he relinquished the Governorship of Bombay to become Governor of Madras, he was to give a more practical proof of his ability to co-operate with Indians. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms provided the Government of Madras with Indian Ministers. Lord Willingdon would not permit those Indian Ministers to fear lest they were not playing their full part in the work of the Government. As far as the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms would have allowed him, he introduced Cabinet responsibility to Madras. He was able to make the working of the reforms in his own province remarkably successful.

It followed that when his ten years of gubernatorial activities in India came to an end, his gifts were not to be wasted. He snatched a few brief months of seclusion, and then he kissed King George's hand on his appointment to be Governor-General of Canada. He was successor to Lord Byng—the Canadian soldiers' Governor-General—and Lord Byng looked after the men returned from the Western Front. There came to Rideau Hall men who had served with distinction in the war, and they came with their wives. It did not matter that their status in civil life was low and their income comparatively small. Lord Byng, however, chose to combine social popularity with political efficiency, and he braved a constitutional struggle with his Ministers. It was conduct which Canada could have forgiven only in a brilliant soldier. Lord Willingdon, who had worked with marked sympathy with an Indian Ministry, was not going to engage in any constitutional disputes during his stay in Canada. Yet

he was ready to restore pre-war social conditions at Ottawa. Bravery on the battlefield was not to excuse the social shortcomings of retail trade, lumberjacking and the production of daughters who cannot join the Junior League. The Government House list was severely restricted. The warriors did not care. Government House need mean little to them. Other people were delighted. French Quebec responded to the old-world courtesy of the Governor-General. New York and Washington never lost an opportunity to entertain him and Lady Willingdon. But when his appointment to the Viceroyalty was announced before his Governor-Generalship had come to an end, Canadians realized, almost for the first time, that an elderly and decorative figure-head might have rare gifts of statesmanship: for what had the Governorship of Bombay and Fort St. George meant to them?

There was no less surprise in India. Convention forbade the translation from a provincial Governorship to the Governorship-General. Indians expected that Mr. MacDonald, as the former President of the Indian National Congress, would choose a Viceroy who was as much an unashamed Socialist as Lord Reading had been an unashamed Liberal and Lord Irwin an unashamed Conservative. The appointment to the Viceroyalty had been invariably political. Once again Indians had misunderstood the purpose of the Viceregal appointment as they had misunderstood Lord Reading's appointment. They knew what was being said about Lord Irwin in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. They did not know what was being said about him in the lobbies. Still less did they know what was being said about him in the country houses of England, and with Mr. Ramsay MacDonald at Chequers country house government had not worked so

## EXCELLENCY

smoothly or so effectively since the last administration of Lord Salisbury. The very daring of Garrowby showed that the appointment of the new Viceroy must be a delicate affair. Lord Willingdon's management of Canadian society, together with his unrivalled Indian experience, made him a favourite candidate. The country houses of England do not often make mistakes.

So, late in his sixty-fifth year, Lord Willingdon sailed with his newly acquired Earldom to Bombay, and as he stood beneath the Gateway and the drums and trumpets struck up the National Anthem, it seemed that Anglo-India had come once more into its own. There was the old spectacular pageantry, the State drive in which members of the Bombay Light Horse and the Governor of Bombay's bodyguard preceded the Viceregal carriage, thus destroying the impression that the cult of simplicity was to acquire any permanence among Englishmen or the ruling classes. Mr. Gandhi was in Bombay, whither he had come to bid farewell to Lord Irwin. Lord Willingdon did not see him. He had other things to do. There was the state entry into New Delhi, the sincere delight in the magnificence of the new palace, the round of festivities at Simla.

Within a few months the delegates of the Round Table Conference would embark at Bombay for a second session in London. There statesmen, British and Indian, would hammer out a new Constitution. The centre of Indian political activity would shift—perhaps for the last time—from Delhi to Whitehall. The Viceroy and his advisers would be left with the unadventurous task of administering the country. The Delhi Pact remained in force. There was a truce in the land. Convicts were at liberty. Mr. Gandhi had committed himself to attendance at the Round Table

## REPRESSION AND REFORM

Conference, and though he endeavoured to discover that the Government officials had broken the truce, *pressure from London compelled Lord Willingdon to receive Mr. Gandhi and to send the penniless leader in a special train from New Delhi to Bombay, whence he sailed a fortnight after the other delegates had left.* With Mr. Gandhi's activities in London Lord Willingdon had nothing to do. Indeed, Mr. Gandhi was left conversing with Quakers, Christian Scientists, and Bishops, while Mr. Ramsay MacDonald went to the country and returned with a majority which was to destroy—perhaps for all time—party politics in Great Britain. The Indian delegates, enervated by the truce in India and discouraged by the apathy of an English public who were wondering how many American dollars and cents made a pound, quarrelled among themselves. The fine unanimity of the first session came nowhere near realization, and Mr. Gandhi's well-intentioned activities served only to provoke a communal tension. Had the British Government desired to bring the Round Table Conference into disrepute it could have done so with little difficulty. But Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, flushed with victory and fully conversant with the Indian situation, determined that, whatever other policies of his Labour administration he would now have to sacrifice, the Indian policy should be unimpaired. At the right moment, therefore, he brought the second session to an end. At a plenary session in St. James's Palace—on December 1, 1931—he showed that the achievements of the first session were not to be destroyed. Federation, responsibility at the centre, provincial autonomy, safeguards: all were assured. The ex-President of the Indian National Congress rescued them at the risk of losing some of his new-found Conservative colleagues, though none left



## EXCELLENCY:

*his Cabinet. It was almost his last display of bold statesmanship before he went up and on.*

Yet a cloud hung over that last plenary session. There had been applause when the Prime Minister announced the Government's adherence to Federation, responsibility at the centre, provincial autonomy and safeguards. There had been applause among the Mohammadans when he said that Sind was to become a separate Province and that the North-West Frontier Province was to be raised to the status of a Governor's Province. There had been a respectful silence when he announced that as a final resort the British Government was prepared to impose a communal settlement. And all the while the delegates were pondering upon statements, appearing that morning in all the London newspapers, that the Government of India had imposed Ordinances against the Terrorists in Bengal.

Terrorism in Bengal has been deep-seated. Its cause is usually economic discontent, but as a movement it was altogether separate from Congress activities. Congress, in fact, has but few roots in Bengal, and the differences between the *satyagrahis* of Gujerat on the Western coast and the Terrorists of Bengal were often striking. It was easy to argue that the Ordinances against Bengal Terrorists were in no sense to be used as a weapon against the Congress, and yet who was to imagine that the promulgation of Ordinances on the eve of an historic plenary session had been incidental and fortuitous? Was there not ample justification for the fear that dominative government had once again taken the place of government by consent?

Whatever fears these Ordinances provoked in Mr. Gandhi were increased when he reached Bombay in Christmas week and learned that yet more Ordinances had been imposed to check a "no rent" campaign

## REPRESSION AND REFORM

among the impoverished agricultural tenants of the United Provinces and to stamp out the "Red Shirt" activities on the North-West Frontier. And because Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru had disobeyed the United Provinces Ordinance, he was now sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. "Christmas presents from Lord Willingdon": so Mr. Gandhi called them when he heard what the Government had done while he was on the high seas. Lord Willingdon, affable and courteous, participated in all the Christmas festivities in Calcutta. Before the week was out he told the Calcutta European Association of his belief that

"we have all been placed in this world for a period of time to work out the will of Providence, that there can be no question of superiority or inferiority on account of race and colour wherever our work may be, and that it cannot be the colour of a man that makes the man, but it is the character of a man, whatever his colour, that counts."

He was true, after all, to the traditions of the Willingdon Sports Club. But what could this dissertation on the colour of men signify to Mr. Gandhi, who had returned from London anxious for peace and was nevertheless confronted with a pack of Ordinances as well as the imprisonment of his ablest lieutenant, Jawaharlal Nehru? He sought an interview with the Viceroy. Personal conversations might have removed difficulties as they had removed all difficulties between him and Lord Irwin. This interview Lord Willingdon was prepared to grant, provided, however, there was no discussion of the measures adopted in Bengal, the United Provinces and the North-West Frontier Province. Those very measures which were making the continuance of the truce impossible were to be excluded

## EXCELLENCE

from the Viceregal conversations. Mr. Gandhi, in fact, could not have gone to New Delhi without the certain repudiation of his followers. In vain Sir Edward Benthall, an English delegate to the Round Table Conference, and Mr. E. Miller, of the Bombay European Association, pleaded against these stipulations. In vain the Welfare of India League sent a telegram to Lord Willingdon. Before the eventful year came to an end, Mr. Gandhi was once more in Yeravda Gaol.

It was a brief step from the arrest of Mr. Gandhi to the proscription of the Congress Working Committee, to the revival of civil disobedience and to arrests which within a few weeks filled the prisons. At one time the prisoners numbered seventy thousand. What were seventy thousand to three hundred and fifty million inhabitants? The seventy thousand included most of the intellectuals, the artists, the students. The seventy thousand were men and women who thought aloud, who formed the opinion of the country, who knew the hollow pretensions of racial superiority. There were others—the men and women who follow the intellectuals, the artists, the students. The seventy thousand might have become one hundred thousand. But the Government would have been put to the expense of finding other accommodation for prisoners. This at least one provincial Government avoided by a revival of the flogging order. People picketing outside the European shops would appear before a magistrate, who summarily ordered them to be flogged. Prison yards would resound with the crack of the whip. There was terrorism in British India before terrorism came to Nazi Germany. And the terrorism was, of course, effective, for who can pretend that the imprisonment of seventy thousand English men and women—nay, the

## REPRESSION AND REFORM

imprisonment of twenty thousand—could not completely paralyse the moral and intellectual life of the Mother Country?

There is no need to stress the Viceroy's responsibility. He had full administrative support. The Cabinet could have objected, but the Cabinet agreed that Lord Willingdon's Government was restoring law and order in a manly and sensible fashion. Parliament could have protested, but Parliament did not care. Even apart from the mass imprisonments, it is not certain that the country would have wanted to prolong civil disobedience. Mr. Gandhi's failure at the Round Table Conference to advance the work already accomplished at the first session was not overlooked by his countrymen. It was possible, many of them thought, to work the new reforms and so manipulate the safeguards that they operated always to India's advantage. Mr. de Valera, recently come to power in Dublin, showed that once again rebellious India might profit from the tactics of Southern Ireland.

Although Lord Willingdon gave his sanction to this unhappy policy of repression—and the tendency to blunt the passion for liberty in the Mother Country has not been the least unfortunate of its results—he coupled with it a determination to expedite the new reforms. The police state was made the prelude to self-government. A reformer is not a good repressionist and a repressionist is not a good reformer. The repressionist got on with his repressions. The reformer waited impatiently for the reforms. Both thanked the Viceroy for his encouragement.

For the Viceroy's concern for the reforms was genuine. He did not inaugurate those reforms. The structure was already set before he had left Quebec. He did not initiate any bold enterprise, like winning

## EXCELLENCY.

the spokesman of Congress to the work of the Round Table Conference. He never attempted to be original or heroic. He never, perhaps, suspected the bitterness among the men and women who crowded into the gaols. He was himself the soul of courtesy, and when he met Jawaharlal Nehru face to face the old Etonian and the old Harrovian spoke to each other as though the noises from the market-places could not disturb the decent ordering of their private lives. But policy demanded the destruction of civil disobedience, and Lord Willingdon destroyed. Policy also demanded the swift coming of the new reforms, and week after week Lord Willingdon impressed upon the Secretary of State the need for putting the Government of India Act upon the Statute Book with the least possible delay. He did not desire repression for its own sake.

Slowly the work of reform proceeded in London. In the autumn of 1932 the delegates returned for a third and final session of the Round Table Conference, but without colleagues from the Indian National Congress. Sir Samuel Hoare, Secretary of State for India since the advent of the National Government, busied himself with the details of the original scheme, and on Christmas Eve the long and now publicly neglected Conference came finally to an end with a bout of speech-making in the Royal Gallery of the House of Lords. There followed a prolonged enquiry from the Joint Select Committee of the Houses of Parliament, and over its deliberations presided the long-legged Lord Linlithgow, saying never an unnecessary word, but nodding his head whenever a statement won his particular approval. That nod could work wonders. Pertinent questions came from the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Salisbury. Sir Samuel Hoare submitted himself to examination by the Joint Select Committee

## REPRESSION AND REFORM

and showed such a mastery of conflicting detail that Mr. Baldwin was led to think he would make a great Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. And all the while Lord Linlithgow sat working with the intelligent industry he had shown when he was Chairman of the Royal Commission on Indian Agriculture. It was evident, long before the Joint Select Committee came to an end, that the future Viceroy would be Lord Linlithgow.

He would be the first, moreover, of a new order of Viceroys. For, however critical the House of Lords and the House of Commons might be of the Government of India Bill, there was little doubt that it would receive the Royal Assent. Said the Duke of Wellington in 1805, "the public mind cannot be brought to attend to an Indian subject." Not even Mr. Churchill's eloquence could create anxiety for the British Government, and when the Act was on the Statute Book Members of Parliament turned with relief to other topics. In the last months of office Lord Willingdon obligingly toured the Indian States to create an atmosphere favourable to Federation. Then the brief illness and death of King George the Fifth recalled him to New Delhi, and there he stayed—in a capital city robbed of all social festivities—until Lord Linlithgow had sailed from Aden towards Bombay. A dutiful monarch made him a Marquess. Lord Reading's death rendered vacant the Lord Wardenship of the Cinque Ports. In due course Lady Willingdon became the hostess of Walmer Castle.

## CHAPTER VI

### FIRST OF A NEW ORDER

AN author remembered his own report on Indian Agriculture. Decked in a white topee and a grey frock-coat he greeted the Governor of Bombay, the Chief-Justice of Bombay, the Bishop of Bombay, the President of the Bombay Municipal Corporation and all the notables who were standing on the hot paving stones which the Gateway of India failed to shelter. Behind the familiar notables came a group of farmers, their clean but homely clothes contrasting strangely with the scarlet and brocade, the legal robes, the lawn sleeves of the Imperial Church. They were present at Lord Linlithgow's request. The Viceroy-elect wished to signify that India was predominantly an agricultural country. He had brought with him some pedigree bulls, and he made various presents of pedigree bulls, as he stayed in Simla. He sought support from the provincial Governors, and they in turn made presents of pedigree bulls. The provincial Governors appealed at his bidding to the business communities, and soon the proprietors of newspapers and the directors of insurance companies were making presents of pedigree bulls, until English ladies—long since accustomed to the stealthy panther, the maddening scorpion, the insidious snake—saw a jungle overrun with bulls. But the bulls, so argued the pious Hindu, were good for the cows. A British Viceroy had become a good cowman. Here was a gesture of which not even Edwin Montagu could have been capable. No one,

## FIRST OF A NEW ORDER

in fact, could have made such a gesture unless he had spent the formative years of his life managing a vast estate. There had gone to India a Scottish laird disposed to regard the entire country as his property. He had all the qualities of a first-class landlord. He might have liked to develop the land beyond all previous recognition, so that tenants and labourers could acclaim him as the good laird. Unhappily, a Viceroy who possessed the rare gift of driving power received his appointment not only in the wrong decade, but in the wrong century.

Fifty years ago Lord Linlithgow would have found India almost untrammelled by representative institutions. He could have checked the migration of industry and ability to the cities. He could have admonished the absentee landlord as George Curzon admonished the absentee ruler. He could have reserved honours and titles for the men who remained on their estates and improved them. He could have dealt a crushing blow at the power of the money-lender, whose tentacles grasp the commercial life of India as well as the homestead of the peasant. And he would have won the warm support of the Queen-Empress, whose instinct told her that British administration in India was divorced from the lives and sufferings of the people. He could have ruled as a benevolent dictator: and if there is any country in the world where benevolent dictatorship can be justified it is India. The sway of political juntas, whether English or Indian, cannot inspire the hope that some leader will check the increasing impoverishment of the peasant and his family.

But his dictatorship would have lasted for five years and no longer. Each viceregal appointment is dependent upon the political complexion of England.



## EXCELLENCY

That complexion varies, and so India has witnessed the alternations of dominative government and government by consent. George Curzon envisaged an autonomous Government of India: he never envisaged an autonomous people of India. When he prepared his magnificent Coronation Durbar for King Edward the Seventh, he forbade the choice of "Onward, Christian Soldiers" for a processional hymn, because its author, Sabin Baring-Gould, had unwisely observed that "Kingdoms rise and wane." The Government of India was to be for ever efficient and autocratic. With it the British Government should have nothing directly to do beyond ensuring that the ablest Englishmen were dispatched to India to man her bureaucratic machine. George Curzon did not realize that a free people must foster freedom elsewhere. There cannot be a dictatorial India without a dictatorial Great Britain. There cannot be a freedom-loving Great Britain without a freedom-loving India. The repression which Lord Willingdon enforced in India was a bitter commentary upon a British Parliament grown careless of freedom among the King's subjects. Future historians will relate the Indian repression to the decline of Parliamentary authority in Great Britain.

There was, however, a more substantial reason why Lord Linlithgow could not play the part of an agricultural dictator. He did not become Viceroy of India until April 1936. Within a few weeks he learnt that provincial autonomy would be inaugurated on April 1, 1937. On that date the vast estate would suddenly shrink. The provincial Governors, with the permission of their new Chief Ministers, would pretend to be the great landowners. The Viceroy would be left in his labyrinthine palace, a limited monarch

## FIRST OF A NEW ORDER

with unlimited accommodation. Lord Linlithgow was born to rule. He was not born to be a Prince. Yet he knew his destiny. There never was a Viceroy—not, at least, since John Lawrence—who went to his post more fully equipped for his task. His excursions with an agricultural Commission may have taught him the urgency of driving power in India, but his Chairmanship of the Joint Select Committee did not permit him to forget that the Viceroy of the future must advise and encourage where the Viceroys of the past enforced and commanded. He knew the endless ramifications of the new reforms. He knew their weaknesses, the pitfalls and the hazards. He knew, moreover, that the success or failure of the new reforms would depend in a disconcerting measure upon the personality and character of the new Viceroy. Success or failure, in fact, would depend upon him, and he decided that the Viceroy must resemble—as far as possible—the Governor-General of a British Dominion. He will have to discipline his fine intelligence with an iron patience if he is not to encounter serious disagreements with his Ministers. Driving power and discretion are unusual partners.

And yet few who have watched Lord Linlithgow at work care to recall the contentious White Paper—published with unconscious irony on St. Patrick's Day, 1933—which described the functions of the future Viceroy. The authors of the White Paper stated that the Viceroy would fill two entirely different offices. He would be both the Viceroy and the Governor-General. As the Viceroy, he would be the intermediary between the Indian States and the Throne: he would uphold the paramountcy of the Crown: he would be above, and not apart from, the Federal Constitution. As the Governor-General,

## EXCELLENCY

he would be the head of the Federal Executive, a *Prime Minister whom the Federal Legislature cannot dislodge*, though it might force all other colleagues, save the Commander-in-Chief, to resign. The White Paper invented a Governor-General who could enact a special measure in defiance of all members of his Cabinet as well as all members of the Legislature. It anticipated a conscientious Governor-General, solitary representative of the British *raj*, who single-handed defies a Legislature containing Princes, Mohammadans, Sikhs, Parsees, Christians, Englishmen, Untouchables. It made the curious assumption that the Governor-General could be in the right, while all other representatives of India's opinion were in the wrong. The White Paper then proceeded to show how the unfortunate man was to act when he found himself in isolated rectitude. It ignored the fact that such a Gilbertian situation would most emphatically mark the end of the British connection in India.

The White Paper Viceroy was not a man of flesh and bone, already attired in his white topee and grey frock-coat. He was as much an abstraction as the "economic man" of an earlier generation of economists. When the new reforms will have come into full operation, the Viceregal office will remain, just as the monarchy remained after the flight of King James the Second and the abdication of King Edward the Eighth. But King William the Third was not allowed to be the same as his predecessor, and it was clear—even when the authors published their White Paper—that the Viceroy of the future would not be the same as Lord Curzon or Lord Irwin. When the leaders of the "glorious revolution" forsook King James for King William, they had tolerably clear notions of what a limited monarch should be. They introduced him

## FIRST OF A NEW ORDER

to the Constitution, where he was as much an abstraction as the "economic man" and the Viceroy of the White Paper. Throughout the last two and a half centuries the limited monarch has been a figure so curiously diverse as King George the Third, George the Fourth, Victoria and Edward the Seventh. There have been times when each acted as though unaware of any constitutional limitations; and it is possible that future Viceroys will act in similar fashion.

Great rulers are born and not made. There would be a different tale to tell if Mary Tudor had produced an heir, or if Princess Charlotte, daughter of George the Fourth, had not died in childbirth; though the disappearance of Queen Elizabeth from our history books would not have prevented the eventual struggle between the monarchy and Parliament, nor would the disappearance of Queen Victoria have prevented the conflict between the House of Lords and the House of Commons in 1911. Lord Linlithgow has already revealed the quality of his gifts, and yet, even before his appointment, it was clear that whoever became the first Viceroy to work with a Federal Government, whether he was to be remembered with affection or to be reviled by posterity, could but hasten or delay the inevitable destiny of the country. India is not a *tabula rasa* on which an individual, however eminent, can write what he will. The Viceroy may combine personal charm with political destiny and, so doing, make stronger the bonds between India and Great Britain. Let it not be forgotten that Queen Elizabeth, after her most serious quarrel with the House of Commons, won back all its affection by saying: "Though God hath raised me high, yet this I count the glory of my crown: that I have reigned with your loves. To be a King and wear a crown is a thing more glorious

## EXCELLENCY<sup>1</sup>

to them that see it than it is pleasing to them that bear it. For myself, I was never so much enticed with the glorious name of a King, or royal authority of a Queen, as delighted that God made me His instrument to maintain His truth and glory, and to defend the Kingdom from peril, dishonour, tyranny and oppression." What if a Viceroy can speak like that and be believed? Those words of Elizabeth, though the royal author did not know it, helped to postpone the Civil War for forty years. Not long ago an American laid a wreath on the tomb of George the Third. It was inscribed: "To the Founder of the United States of America." But the United States would probably have had a royal—or at least a Parliamentary—founder, even if George the Third had not drifted from stupidity to lunacy!

To what destiny is the Viceregal office moving? Indians are fond of watching movements in the Irish Free State, and even the swift events of December, 1936, could show that there might be useful parallels between India and Ireland. Compare, for instance, the actual governorship of Wentworth with the nominal Governorship-General of Mr. McNeill, formerly a member of the Indian Civil Service. Superficially, Wentworth's governorship of Ireland was rather like Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty of India, though no one of Wentworth's generation possessed Curzon's superb sense of justice. Wentworth, like Curzon, believed in the establishment of an effective satrapy. He had been a Parliamentary leader. He wished to make Ireland a stronghold of the royal power. It was to be the recruiting ground for the King's troops. Ireland was to be a country prosperous and contented, and it was Wentworth who first made the linen industry a source of wealth to the inhabitants. With a daring that was

strangely at variance with later ideas of the Empire as an economic union, he made a commercial treaty with Spain for the encouragement of Irish fisheries. He preserved the forests and developed the minerals. Not until the advent of the youthful Arthur Balfour was another English statesman to realize that the root of Irish discontent is poverty. It is the root of discontent in India.

The world has not followed the lead of its Wentworths and Balfours. Wentworth, as the ruler of Ireland, seemed to be all-powerful: and now the Viceregal office in Ireland has disappeared. The Irish Office, in which Arthur Balfour proved his mettle, has also disappeared. Suppose that extinction is the ultimate fate of the India Office and the Indian Viceroyalty: what personal influence is to prevent it? Lord Dudley was adored by the Dublin crowds. Lord Aberdeen strove hard for the redemption of the Dublin slums. Both these peers survived the Viceroyalty. Even the appointment of a Roman Catholic—Lord Fitzalan—did not save it from extinction. Lord Fitzalan, in fact, has lived to see the extinction of the Governorship-General as well. In December 1921 there were still some thousands of Englishmen who argued that Ireland could never cope with Home Rule. In December 1936 Mr. de Valera destroyed the last tokens of the King's authority within the Irish Free State while Englishmen were insisting that they had exchanged one King for another without the slightest injury to the constitutional structure of the British Empire.

Yet to Wentworth the extinction of the Irish Viceroyalty would have been unthinkable. The extinction of the Indian Viceroyalty would have been unthinkable to Lord Curzon. It is unthinkable to many statesmen

## EXCELLENCY

of the present time. It is certainly unthinkable to those Maharajahs who debate among themselves whether they will live to see an Indian installed as the chief representative of the King-Emperor. The prohibition against an Indian Viceroy of India is no more reasonable than the old prohibition against a Roman Catholic Viceroy of Ireland. Australia and South Africa have both nominated their own Governors-General. In an India anxious to remove all traces of racial inferiority the demand for an indigenous Viceroy will steadily increase.

Federation gives to the Princes of India a share in the government of all-India which they have not had before. If ever the Viceroyalty becomes their prize, they will forget their intrigues for that modern, *parvenu* gift—the Chancellorship of the Chamber of Princes. They will ask first that the King-Emperor shall be pleased always to appoint a Viceroy from their own exalted Order. This will be but little removed from the request that they themselves shall make the Viceregal nomination. The Order will become an electoral college, and its chosen Viceroy will be *primus inter pares*, who incidentally represents the King-Emperor. It needs little imagination to envisage the vast scale of intrigue that such an election would involve. Is the Nizam of Hyderabad, premier Prince of India, ruler of her largest State, descendant of a Viceroy disloyal to his Moghul Emperor, a worthier candidate than the Maharana of Udaipur, who descends from the Sun? And are the rulers of the States more noble in lineage, more aristocratic in bearing, more constant in learning, more dutiful or more statesmanlike than men whose ancestors surrendered their swords and their lands to the conquering Englishmen or his Indian ally? These Highnesses

## FIRST OF A NEW ORDER

who flaunt their wealth in a land burdened with poverty and debt, who play polo, slay tigers and command from the most austere matrons of Anglo-India a sycophantic smile: what breed of man can they be? Can anything be said in their defence? It is well to enquire.





HIS HIGHNESS



## CHAPTER VII

### A GOD AND THE CONSTITUTION

A FEW English people who stood waiting for the arrival of the Boulogne-Folkestone train at Victoria Station late in July, 1936, saw a slightly built and turbaned Indian alighting from a first-class carriage to be surrounded by fellow-countrymen, who, eager to greet him and to bestow their garlands and flowers, almost deprived top-hatted officials of their duties of welcome. The turbaned Indian received their greetings without fuss and without undue display of pleasure. He forced his steps towards a waiting car and was promptly driven away. Few of the casual onlookers troubled to discover who the turbaned Indian could be. He was "just another rajah." They did not know that the Maharajah of Mysore was the most important Indian Prince who has so far visited London or that he was seeing London for the first time. They would have laughed a little uncomfortably if someone had told them that the Prince is occasionally a god. The Maharajah was content that there should be a lack of interest in himself and in his mission. He had taken care not to visit London until its attenuated season was drawing to a close. He saw his King-Emperor but once before Imperial Majesty sailed in the *Nahlin*. He held audiences in his hotel. Here came Cabinet Ministers, former Viceroy and Governors: but no journalists. He spent long hours in St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, the National Gallery and the British Museum. Then a special coach,

## HIS HIGHNESS

hitched in Indian fashion to various trains, took him through the English countryside. He saw the wooded lanes of Warwickshire, the meandering Severn, the lakes and hills of Westmorland, the chimes of the Isle of Wight. The countryside moved him deeply. To see the island-kingdom of the conquerors, bathed in August sunlight and teased with the shadows of hurrying clouds, had been well worth the long sea-journey from Mysore, where a general altitude of three thousand feet breaks the rigours of the tropical sun and ancient temples set before artificial lakes and tanks mirror a land already encrusted with tradition when Cæsar first saw the cliffs of Kent.

Within a few weeks the Maharajah was once more moving among his own subjects. There came a day when he quitted his stately palace for a ceremonial walk to the foot of a steep hill, crowned by a temple. He showed the same lack of fuss, the same imperturbable dignity, which he had shown when his countrymen greeted him at Victoria Station. But the crowds were observing a reverential silence. They watched their ruler climb the stone stairway which leads directly to the temple. And here dwells the spirit of the Maharajah's ancestress, founder of the Royal House of Mysore. The Maharajah, having reached the summit of the hill, entered the temple, where he communed with the spirit of his ancestress. Before he left the temple, he had become a god.

For a week the god dwelt in the stately palace of the Maharajah. He could not be touched by human hands. He could not be washed. He could not be shaved. He could not wash or shave himself. The god showed himself to the people. He heard their prayers. He reigned on earth until the Dusserah festivities were due to end. On the last day he clambered on a magni-

## A GOD AND THE CONSTITUTION

ficently caparisoned elephant and led a procession which included all members of the Royal Family and all members of the court to a vast open space, upon which stood a tent. This the god entered alone. When he emerged he was a god no longer. Men washed him and shaved him. They dressed him in a military uniform, so that he was at liberty to fulfil the normal duties of a ruler. The army was conveniently drawn up for him to review.

Now that he was no longer a god, he consented to receive the English community in the evening. He entered a large room in the palace with his heir, the Yuvarajah, and the British Resident. He found English men and women waiting to make their bows and their curtseys. Year after year he has received the English community in this fashion. He spares them the embarrassment of meeting a god, though he covers himself with diamonds, rubies, emeralds and pearls. He does this because diamonds, rubies and emeralds have magical qualities. Their magic passes through his body and thus ensures for his people happiness and peace and, above all other things, fertility. To this august agent of magic the men make bows and the women deep curtseys. They are free to bow and curtsey to the British Resident, and as a learned economist, closely associated with the Quaker community in Oxford, "stood before this mass of superstitious splendour," his soul "revolted a little at bowing to it. It was bowing down in the House of Rimmon. But if one did not bow there one had no right to enter. So I duly bowed to Maharajah and Yuvarajah, and then relieved my feelings by bowing equally low to the Resident, as the symbol, charged with its own magic, of Western civilization, of which we were prouder in those days than now." It was

## HIS HIGHNESS

an attitude which the Maharajah himself would have been the first to appreciate. For all his piety and his single-minded devotion to the Hindu religion, the Maharajah is less concerned with his periodic assumptions of godhead, his diamonds and rubies, his emeralds and pearls, than he is with his own personal reputation as a ruler. At the turn of the century Lord Curzon invested him with full powers of rulership. It was on that ceremonious occasion that the Maharajah, then eighteen years old, resolved that he would make himself India's model ruler. Environment and family tradition had helped him in his resolve.

For the family tradition asserts that, in the fourteenth century, two Rajput brothers voyaged southwards in search of adventure. They reached the kingdom of Mysore when a distracted ruler had wandered away, leaving the Queen and his daughter to fend for themselves in the palace. Hearing of the ruler's distraction, a rival prince advanced upon the capital and seized the Queen and the princess. The Rajput brothers at once came to the rescue, put the rival to flight and annexed the kingdom. Later the elder Rajput brother married the princess, and thus the present Royal House of Mysore was founded. This, at least, is the story which the spirit of the ancestress on the hill-top might tell, and it is likely enough to be true.

Unhappily, the dynasty, ancient by the time Dupleix and Clive began their fighting, fell before the superior craft of Haider Ali, a Mohammadan adventurer who seized the House of Mysore and was soon engaged in war with the British. Whether or not the former dynasty could have held its own against Haider Ali, the position of Mysore would have made her a principal factor in the baffling struggle between the French and the British. It was none the less the remarkable

## A GOD AND THE CONSTITUTION

ability of Haider Ali and his son, Tipu Sultan, which put the British forces in grave peril and which came near to ending all English dreams of an Empire in the East. In the end it was the Mohammadan adventurers who suffered defeat. Tipu Sultan emerged from the first struggle shorn of half his dominions and burdened with an excessive subsidy. But he was not the man to accept defeat. "There is," wrote Sir Thomas Munro, "a kind of infatuation about Indian chiefs who have lost a part of their dominions which tempts them to risk the rest in a contest which they know to be hopeless." Tipu Sultan was enraged against the English because they were infidels, because they were intruders from the sea and because, wherever they went, they brought misery and ruin. He may have been barbaric in his taste, brutal in his punishments and refined only in the curiosity which drove him to experiment with a new calendar, a new scale of weights and measures, a new coinage; but he insisted always that his peasantry should be well fed and well protected. He employed a great Hindu, Purnaya, to be his Dewan and, given the impossible freedom from war, Purnaya would have made Mysore the "model State" before the close of the eighteenth century. Tipu Sultan knew that his peasants were happier under him than they were in territories already ceded to the British, and Englishmen who were building up an absurd landlord-system in Bengal marvelled in their turn at the prosperity of Tipu Sultan's subjects. They had seen great strips of territory bandied about from one unjust ruler to another, and they knew what disasters these transfers could inflict upon the peasants. Sir John Malcolm watched the Nizam of Hyderabad's officers collect the revenues from the lands which the English had just ceded, and he was shocked by what



## HIS HIGHNESS

he saw. Tortures were inflicted to extract funds which the peasants had not got, and men and women "had heavy muskets fastened to their ears; some large stones upon their breasts; whilst others had their fingers pinched with hot pincers. Their cries of agony and declarations of inability to pay appeared only to whet the appetites of their tormentors."

The English might have left Tipu Sultan to experiment in peace with his calendar, his weights and measures, his coinage, but his own implacable hatred, his thirst for revenge, was to make his extirpation an essential factor of British policy. Richard Wellesley became Governor-General in 1798 and promptly began his preparations for the last Mysore War. Two separate forces were to invade the shrunken dominions, and before either of them reached Mysore, Tipu Sultan knew that he was beaten. He called upon the soothsayers and the astrologers. He commanded the prayers alike of mullahs and brahmans. But Richard Wellesley left nothing to chance. From the Sultan's fate there was no escape. "Better to die like a soldier," he cried, "than to live a miserable dependent on the infidels, in the list of their pensioned rajahs and nabobs." The English saw him standing at the gateway of Seringapatam. He was desperately wounded. But he held his sword in his hand until an English soldier, coveting the gold buckle of his sword-belt, slew him. That evening Arthur Wellesley stood over the corpse in the torchlight. A fiery hatred still seemed to issue from the ashen face. Wellesley had to stoop down and feel the pulse and the heart before he could convince himself that the Tiger of Mysore had died in battle.

The English took away the Tiger's treasures. The visitor to Windsor Castle may see them hoarded obscurely in an alcove as he leaves the Waterloo



MAHARAJAH OF MYSORE

*Graphic Photo Union*



## A GOD AND THE CONSTITUTION

Chamber with its massive carpet woven by Indian convicts. A few of the jewels, however, came back to India, for they were embedded in the star and the badge of the Order of St. Patrick which a grateful and uncomprehending monarch conferred upon Richard Wellesley. Mysore itself was not annexed. The shrunken dominions reverted to the older dynasty, and once more the spirit in the hill-top temple communed with her princely descendants. But the English asserted their authority. Richard Wellesley exacted a large annual subsidy, which Mysore is still paying, and Purnaya, though loyal to Tipu Sultan, became the Dewan of a new ruler and won the unstinted praise of Arthur Wellesley. After his death the administration deteriorated. The court became weak and corrupt. A peasants' revolt in 1831 led to the intervention of the English, and for half a century they remained the administrators of the country.

For fifty years the ancestress waited, but not in vain. The Mysoreans are a united people and conscious of their own separate identity. There was a growing demand that the ruling family should be re-installed, and Lord Ripon did what nearly twenty years earlier John Lawrence had wanted to do. He restored both the Maharajah and the State. But he restored them with a difference. He was too thorough-going in his Gladstonian Liberalism to make an unfettered gift to autocracy. The "instrument of transfer" stipulated that "the Maharajah of Mysore shall at all times conform to such advice as the Governor-General in Council may offer him with a view to the management of his finances, the settlement and collection of the revenues, the imposition of taxes, the administration of justice. . . ." It was also stated that in every dispute on these matters, "the decision of the Governor-

## HIS HIGHNESS

General in Council shall be final." The periodic god was to rule as the Viceroy's agent.

They were conditions which the autocratic rulers of other States could not be expected to like. Yet the new ruler accepted them willingly enough. He found himself saddled with a Representative Assembly which was to meet twice a year to discuss the Budget, to ask questions, to present petitions and to give its views on the Maharajah's legislation. Again this condition, so perplexing to the autocratic rulers, was accepted. In fact, the Maharajah was determined that in no way should the Mysoreans regret the passing of the direct British rule over them. He was fortunate to have a wife pious and politically-minded, who helped him in all his work, and when he died in 1894, his Maharani ruled as the Regent for her son, Krishnaraja Wadiyar. It is possible that with the rule of a lady, the Royal House became ultramontane in its orthodoxy. The Maharani ruled strictly from the purdah, and when a dentist called to extract her teeth, he was commanded to pull them through a slit in the curtain. She imposed upon the young Maharajah a strict upbringing tempered by long pilgrimages to the holy places of India. Brahmans advised her, and Brahmans, it was said, ruled her court. Yet her son, however orthodox, was not to be alienated from other people, and one of his school-friends was Mirza Ismail, member of an aristocratic Persian family which had left its mother country in the middle of the last century. Neither the training of his mind nor the training of his body was to be neglected. Sir Stuart Fraser became his tutor. It is to the tutor's credit that he encouraged the boy to paint and to play the piano, to study the painting, the architecture and the music of the people over whom he was eventually to rule. The Maharajah mastered Sanskrit. The art

## A GOD AND THE CONSTITUTION

and music of the West attracted him. He became a fine athlete.

He was well prepared for rulership, therefore, when Lord Curzon travelled down to Mysore in 1902 for his investiture. For a long time there was no obvious change in the affairs of the State. Twice a year the Representative Assembly met to discuss the Budget and to criticize the Budget. Once a year the Maharajah climbed the hill-top, communed with his ancestress and became a god. The Dowager Maharani lived on, counselling her son. The son resolved to reign, like his father, as a constitutional monarch. He selected his own Dewan and then left the Dewan to administer the country. He contented himself with a modest Privy Purse. All other revenues belong to the State. The Maharajah has watched the growth of industry in Mysore. A great hydro-electric on the Cauvery has flooded the country with cheap electricity. Electric power works the coal-mines of Kolar, from which nearly one and a half millions are produced. A vast dam across the Cauvery enables a canal to irrigate about one hundred thousand acres. Yet Mysore is only at the beginning of her industrial development.

This rapid development has, of course, its critics. Dr. Coleman, the Director of Agriculture in Mysore, regards industrial development as the obsession of Mysore's officials, and he has argued that a five per cent. increase in the agricultural out-turn means a greater increment in the wealth of the State than a fifty per cent. increase in the out-turn of the manufacturing industries. He sees redemption in the use of a new plough, simple, fool-proof and light in draught, having all the merits of the traditional plough, but capable of effective use before the rains come.

## HIS HIGHNESS

Dr. Coleman never won the Maharajah's Government to his point of view. The State is wedded to industrial development. A speech which the Dewan delivered soon after the Maharajah's return from Europe showed that the administration is determined to adopt a well-planned State Socialism. The Mysoreans of to-day, like the advisers of savage Tipu Sultan, often look beyond the boundaries of their own State. They see throughout British India an increasing agricultural poverty and they believe that the economics of India are alarmingly one-sided. In 1924 India could export over one million tons of wheat. No other country wants her wheat to-day. Agriculture, in fact, needs the corrective of industry. The cottage industries of India—for all the encouragement of Mr. Gandhi—will never create a well-balanced economy. They believe that they are leading India by their example, and it is almost certain that they are right.

But even those who oppose the Mysorean policy are free to declare what is in their minds, for the foundations of freedom have broadened since the Maharajah first ascended the throne. Mysore could not have ignored the turbulent influence of British India after the war. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms meant, among other things, the triumph of a non-Brahman party over the once powerful Brahmans in the Presidency of Madras, and Brahman defeat emphasized the Brahman ascendancy in the neighbouring State of Mysore. To Mysore went several of the defeated Brahmans from Madras. Their arrival created resentment and soon there was a popular outcry against the Brahman oligarchy. The Maharajah was among the first to sense this resentment and, in spite of his orthodox background, he appreciated it. He decided

## A GOD AND THE CONSTITUTION

to liberalize the Constitution. The reforms which he introduced resembled in many ways the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, under which British India continued to be governed until April 1, 1937, but he carefully avoided the contentious experiment called dyarchy. He instituted a Legislative Council composed of fifty members, of whom the elected majority were non-officials, and he gave this Council the authority to introduce laws and regulations, to pass the Budget and to move resolutions. The Executive Council, however, was his own. It was responsible to him and not to the Legislature. In 1926, still displaying his freedom from the Brahman oligarchy, he appointed his former schoolfriend, Mirza Ismail, a Persian and a Mohammadan, to be his Dewan. The appointment was to have lasted for five years: Sir Mirza Ismail is still the Dewan of Mysore.

The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms inaugurated the Chamber of Princes. There is but one Prince—the Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar—more powerful than the Maharajah of Mysore, or whose State is larger than Mysore. It was, therefore, expected that the Maharajah of Mysore would play a leading part in the Chamber. He prefers, on the contrary, to confine his attention to his own State. He visits Delhi as seldom as possible. He has toured in Madras to watch the progress of the reforms. Otherwise, he remains in Mysore until he is prompted to make a pilgrimage to some holy place, and then no member of his entourage, dreading the discomfort, can hint that reasons of state should keep him in his own capital. There were occasional requests that the Maharajah should visit Europe. He might have attended the Coronation of King George the Fifth and shut his eyes through the long ecclesiastical ceremony, lest his soul appear to



## HIS HIGHNESS

be "bowing down in the House of Rimmon." He might have visited London for the Round Table Conference. Like the Nizam of Hyderabad, he chose to send his Minister.

Perhaps the Maharajah has been actually helped by his lack of personal contact with Europe. He is, first and foremost, a great Indian with a great Indian outlook. He is cultured and intellectual, but he is not—as the saying goes—thoroughly "anglicized." He follows hounds at Ootacomund. He gives hunt breakfasts. He plays polo. He plays squash, and once he played against the Duke of Windsor and ignored the trivial convention that the Royalty of England should not suffer defeat. But he will never dine with Englishmen. His heart is in India and nowhere else. That is why—for all its emancipation, its learning, its representative institutions and its industrial progress—Mysore is spiritually one of the most Indian of the States. Mr. Gandhi happened to be in Mysore when the Maharajah was celebrating his fifty-second birthday, and what he saw impressed him deeply. This, he said, is "Ram Raj."

Discontent is not confined to the poor and the unprivileged. For the past twenty years and more the foundations of British rule in India have been critically examined by merchant and lawyer, prince and peasant. The Maharajah considered the fortunes of his own State in relation to the paramount Power. He discovered the irksome "instrument of transfer" whereby Lord Ripon had made him and his father the mere agents of the Viceroy. It was a tribute to his successful rule in Mysore that the Secretary of State abolished its offending stipulations. He discovered that the talk about the conscious solidarity of the Mysorean people had not led the British to abolish the pretentious Civil

## A GOD AND THE CONSTITUTION

and Military Station in which live more than half the citizens of Bangalore, and Bangalore, with a population of some 350,000 people, is the largest city in the State. It contains a garrison of British and Indian troops. It is virtually the capital of the British Resident, and within the station the writ of the Maharajah does not run. Its existence is a strange commentary upon the British attitude to the internal sovereignty of the States.

Still more of an anachronism—and one particularly resented by the Maharajah and his advisers—is the continuance of the subsidy which Richard Wellesley imposed upon the defeat and death of Tipu Sultan in 1799. The subsidy stands to-day at a sum equivalent to £175,000. It was once equivalent to £250,000. When Richard Wellesley imposed this sum, he agreed that it should be devoted to securing the adequate defence of Mysore. It would save Mysore from the acquisitive zeal of the Nizam, the unbounded ambitions of the Mahratta chieftains. To-day the Nizam's dominions are fixed. The Mahratta chieftains are scattered. The *Pax Britannica* is enforced throughout India. The subsidy lost its original justification more than a century ago. Yet it is still paid, and with it goes more than a quarter of a million sterling in sea duties. There are States in India where such payments, if they were remitted, would involve personal gain to the ruler. The Maharajah has his own Privy Purse. It is not possible to pretend that the sea duties and the subsidy do not inflict a severe penalty upon a people which number only six millions, and it is fair to argue that the Government of India receives from Mysore more than she gives.

As the preparations for the new reforms in India proceeded, it became increasingly clear that Mysore

## HIS HIGHNESS

had no wish to enter the Federation until the Government of India had abolished Richard Wellesley's subsidy. Sir Samuel Hoare, examined by the Joint Select Committee, agreed that the Mysore subsidy was resented and that it ought to go. But the Finance Minister in New Delhi is a harassed individual. He needs far more money than he can find. If he remitted £175,000 to Mysore he would be compelled to look elsewhere for the money. It would come inevitably from British India, and this would mean censure—and perhaps obstruction—in the Legislative Assembly. So Mysore suffers for the sake of a little Parliamentary peace in British India.

It is a suffering which the Maharajah is not prepared to condone. The Government of India Act entered the Statute Book. The Viceregal drive to bring the Princes into the Federation began. The Maharajah came suddenly to England. The desire to see the buildings and the paintings of Western Europe conflicted with his loyalty to the rules of his caste. He fell to the call from the West. It was no casual visitor who spent long hours in St. Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, the National Gallery and the British Museum. His eye and his ear were well trained. Though he received Cabinet Ministers, former Viceroys and former Governors in his hotel, he was never the first to speak of the subsidy. To have spoken thus would have violated his notions of constitutional monarchy. Political controversy he left to his Dewan, who travelled to Europe with him. Sir Mirza Ismail was by no means inactive.

The Maharajah returned to his palace, his Dusserah processions and periodic godhead, determined not to commit his State to Federation until Richard Wellesley's subsidy had followed Tipu Sultan to the shades.

## A GOD AND THE CONSTITUTION

It is nevertheless difficult to envisage a Federation without Mysore. The tradition that her contented peasantry should be an example to the rest of India dies hard. Without the friendly co-operation of Federal India she cannot get her produce to the sea, and none at the Round Table Conference spoke more eloquently of Federation or showed a clearer appreciation of its problems than did Sir Mirza Ismail. But even when Mysore's place in Federal India is finally established, the future of the Maharajah will continue to engross the agitators. His very success has shown the dangers of his rule. Both the Legislative Council and the older Representative Assembly make opinion fully vocal, even though they may not make the Government fully representative. But the Ministry is responsible to the Maharajah, and the Maharajah alone. There exists no machinery for causing a Minister to resign. He holds his office during the Maharajah's pleasure. The standards which the Maharajah and his Ministers have set for themselves make failure to maintain them all the more serious. What is to happen when the Maharajah's successor comes to the throne? Will he show the same unobtrusive statesmanship? Will he give the right encouragement, the firm advice, the indispensable loyalty to his own Ministers when the ship of State encounters a rough sea? Will he command the love of his people? Will the god be godlike?

The Mysoreans are an intelligent and a proud people. They have tasted freedom. Their Press gives them a fair idea of what is going on in the world about them, and they have a conscientious Prince to thank if they wish still further to develop their representative institutions and to submit to a Government which is responsible not to their Maharajah, but to their

## HIS HIGHNESS

Legislative Council. Has the constitutional monarch smoothed the way for the limited monarch? A glance at some other States will show how profound is the difference between constitutional authority and autocratic power.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FAITHFUL ALLY

ROLLS ROYCE cars cruise through the crowded streets of Hyderabad. There are strange trophies on their bonnets and elaborate 'armorial bearings on their carriage doors. Multitudinous sounds issue from their horns, so that a few yards of the roadway may be cleared of pedestrians and the casual cow. They attract no attention. The ostentation of wealth grows stale. Then an ancient Buick car leaves a large and unpretentious bungalow on the outskirts of the city. Sentries salute smartly. A lithe, slightly-built man acknowledges the salutes. His high turban emphasizes the aristocratic cheek-bones. The heavy moustache suggests an imperiousness of temper. Sometimes the Buick car forges its way through the crowded streets. Everywhere there is recognition and subdued excitement. The cacophony of the horns is momentarily softened. More often the Buick car rambles towards the open country, and the little man who sits at the back feeds upon the austere beauty of the Deccan hills. It is, perhaps, the right enjoyment for one whose chief pastime is the writing of Persian lyrics. He can afford to live simply and to ignore the extravagances of the Hyderabad nobles. He is the King.

Once a year he puts away his simple living. He goes to Delhi. Though Moghul majesty perished in the flames of the Indian Mutiny, the Moghul Viceroys still reign in Hyderabad. The church which Lord Irwin was anxious to complete in New Delhi may be the

## HIS HIGHNESS

spiritual symbol of a new order. A Moghul ruler must go to Delhi to show the world that the older order still endures. He has a duty to the Prophet. His ecclesiastical advisers have ordained that no writ or summons, no magazine or newspaper, no letter or poem, no telegram or cablegram shall perish if it bears the name of Mohammad—a name borne by several thousands of his subjects. He descends from Abu Bakr, first of all the Caliphs. His son and heir is married to the daughter of the last of the Caliphs. He mirrors the splendours of Moghul India. It does not matter that his ancestor betrayed the Moghul Emperors and made a kingdom of his Viceroyalty. The Emperors have gone. He takes their place. He resides in Delhi in a stately palace. He brings with him his entire *zenana*, and as it numbers not less than two hundred ladies, the safe passage of the special train is always a matter of some concern for the railway officials. The British Viceroy in his turn imposes the tortuous ceremonial of welcome. There are historic reasons why the representative of the King-Emperor must impress the world's richest individual, the "Faithful Ally of the British Government," the premier Prince of India, His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar.

With the death of Aurangzeb, the fanatical Emperor, the Moghul power began to disintegrate and crumble. The Emperor's Viceroy in Hyderabad, Asaf Jah, knew that loyalty should have made him the supporter of Aurangzeb's puppet successors in Delhi. Personal ambition dictated that he should convert his Viceroyalty into a kingdom. Geography favoured these ambitions. From the heights of the Deccan he could be the master of southern India. He summoned to his aid fellow-Mohammadans of various nationalities. He played off one Mahratta chieftain against another.

## THE FAITHFUL ALLY

He made tributaries of Arcot, Cuddapah and Karnal, Vizianagram, Bobbili and Jaipar. Mysore, still free from the ravages of Haider Ali, admitted his supremacy. He was already a far more powerful personage than the imperial puppets, though he still acknowledged a vague suzerainty from Delhi. There was a chance that he could ward off the Mahratta chieftains until, exhausted by fighting against each other, they ceased to be a danger to other neighbours. Asaf Jah, in fact, might have made himself the ruler of all lands south of the Godaveri.

Then came the foreigners from the sea, Frenchmen and Englishmen fighting each other, and fighting with desperate earnestness, though Windsor and Versailles thought their struggle parochial and remote. They fought each other outside Madras in 1747. The French occupied the town. Dupleix seized everything he could lay hands on, and a harassed Governor of Fort St. David appealed for help from Nizam Asaf Jah. The Nizam had no love for the uncoloured intruders from the sea. He feared the French more than the English, for they were superior in intelligence and in industry. So he answered the appeal from the Governor of Fort St. David and ordered his satellite, the Nawab of Arcot, to drive the French out of Madras and restore the town to the English. The French gave further proof of their superior intelligence and industry, for they defeated the forces of the Nawab with the utmost ease. The Nizam, already an old man and near to the grave, feared the worst, and within three years the adroit and cunning Bussy had made himself the virtual dictator of Hyderabad. The English were at a hopeless disadvantage until Clive realized that their first permanent footing must be made not on the highlands of southern India but on the delta of the



## HIS HIGHNESS

Ganges. Even so, the French—masters of Hyderabad—could not easily be dislodged. But they were not properly supported by Versailles. The English themselves were not properly supported by Downing Street until Windsor founded the United States and statesmen turned their unwilling attention to India—the brightest jewel that remained of the British Crown.

Within sixty years the English were freed of their French rivals. The jewels of Tipu Sultan adorned the Order of St. Patrick now worn by Richard Wellesley, who, flushed with victory, determined to keep the successors of Nizam Asaf Jah in subjection. He had forgotten—if he ever knew—that a Governor of Fort St. David once appealed to the Nizam for help. Geography had made the Nizam master of southern India and geography must now yield to the will of Richard Wellesley. Without the Northern Circars, the Carnatic, the “ceded districts” of Ballary, Anantpur and Karnal, without the Berars—all of them lopped from the Dominion founded by Nizam Asaf Jah—how could the English have hoped to consolidate their conquest in India? And this consolidation Richard Wellesley was determined to begin. He commanded the Nizam to awaken “to a just sense of the extensive advantages which the connection with the English had brought to him,” for they had “destroyed his enemies.” “From a weak, decaying and despised state, he has recovered substantial strength . . . and resumed a respectable posture among the princes of India.” Henceforward Richard Wellesley would control the Nizam’s external policy. He stipulated that ten thousand English troops should be stationed in Hyderabad, and these troops the Nizam was to supplement with nine thousand cavalry and six thousand infantry of his own. They were to be maintained at

## THE FAITHFUL ALLY

the Nizam's expense. In return Richard Wellesley pledged his Government to observe the Nizam's internal sovereignty.

That pledge was soon broken. The presence of English troops in Hyderabad provoked the deepest resentment. Everywhere there was a passive hostility and the English were driven to insist that they must first approve the Ministers whom the Nizam wished to support. The British Resident was to be the power behind the throne. There followed difficulties about the raising of fifteen thousand troops, for the Nizam could not find fifteen thousand fighting men throughout his dominions. The English, therefore, decided to raise the troops themselves and to charge the Nizam for their maintenance. The Nizam's finances were an inextricable muddle. His payments to the English were necessarily in arrears and in 1853 they decided to demand security. They took the Berars, the richest of all the Nizam's provinces, the "Garden of the Deccan."

Within a few years came the Indian Mutiny. Mohammadan India was in revolt. The Moghul Emperor, aged and weary, made the last bid of Akbar's line for rulership. He called, like his predecessors, for help from the Viceroy of the South, and English administrators, fighting against dreadful odds, knew that once the Nizam joined forces with the mutineers all would be lost. In the city of Hyderabad the Mohammadans declared a holy war. They raised the green flag and attacked the British Residency. Yet they were a small minority planted in a Hindu country. They could not have carried the Hindu peasantry or the Mahratta artisans with them. Without an effective lead from the Nizam and his Ministers they were lost. The successors of Asaf Jah are not accustomed to take

## HIS HIGHNESS

false steps, and the British controlled the appointment of the Chief Minister, who, since 1853, had been Sir Salar Jang, a born administrator, reformer of the judicature and revenue systems, organizer of the police. He needed time to complete his reforms, and time meant peace. The Hyderabad Mohommadans in destroying the English would eventually destroy themselves.

So, once again, the Nizam came to the help of the English. The Emperor went into exile and with the Moghul Empire perished also the East India Company. The Crown assumed responsibility for the government of India, and an impersonally grateful Queen forgave the Nizam the arrears for the Hyderabad Contingent which, even after deducting the proceeds from the Berars, stood at nearly a million pounds. The Queen kept the Garden of the Deccan, though her Government remitted to the Nizam all profits above the cost of maintaining the Contingent. The Nizam and his Ministers were soon afraid that the Queen would never part with the Garden. For more than forty years they grumbled. The cost of maintaining the Contingent, they argued, was unnecessarily high: so also was the cost of administering the Berars. And, like Podsnap, the English dismissed these complaints with impatient statements. Should the Hyderabad Contingent go short of supplies? Should the Garden of the Deccan be administered without efficiency? So the Nizam and his Ministers waited for another appeal for help from the English. They would answer the appeal. But they would demand the return of the Berars.

It was not to be. Instead, there was something like an appeal from the Nizam to the Government of India. Sir Salar Jang, who administered the country for

thirty years, left no competent successor. Administration deteriorated, and the extravagances of the court brought Hyderabad to the verge of bankruptcy. It was a situation about which Lord Curzon had decided views. He had not lived in Richard Wellesley's great palace for nothing. He would have liked all the Princes of India to resemble Lord Ripon's Maharajah of Mysore and to be no more than the decorative agents of the Viceroy. He was ready to go as far as he could in checking the powers of the premier Prince, and in 1902 he took action. His language was polite, but firm. He commanded—there is no better word—the Nizam to appoint an Englishman for his Finance Minister. He also required him to set a limit to the expenses of his court and to establish a Civil List. He was ready to merge the Hyderabad Contingent in the Indian Army, but it was desirable that the Nizam should lease the Berars in perpetuity to the Government of India for a quit-rent of twenty-five lakhs of rupees. The Nizam complained bitterly. The Mohammadan nobility were angered. But complaints were of no avail. Lord Curzon had tasted power. There were no apparent limits to the authority of his dominative government, and it was from an Anglo-Irish General, not an oriental potentate, that he eventually encountered humiliation and defeat. The Nizam believed that Sir Salar Jang's associations with the English had long since converted the ruler of Hyderabad into a limited monarch and that he was powerless to withstand the demands of Calcutta. So he signed away the Garden of the Deccan and endeavoured to live within his Civil List. His successor endeavours to live within the Civil List by enforcing the most heterodox economies. The Civil List provides the Nizam with a thousand pounds a day. Soon

## HIS HIGHNESS

after the Nizam Mahhub Ali had signed away the Garden he became the recipient of a G.C.B. "Gave Curzon Berar": the witticism was too obvious to be missed, and it was familiar to nearly all Englishmen in India before the War.

And the humiliations which had given this witticism its point and popularity, the present Nizam, who succeeded in 1911, has never forgotten. He tried to show his own independence by becoming, like King George the Third, his own Chief Minister. Simla, however vexed, could not forbid his actual rulership, and the opportunity for which Nizam Mahhub Ali had waited—the call for help from the English—was soon to come. The English were at war with the Caliph. Mohammadan was fighting Mohammadan. Mohammadans waited, as they waited in the Mutiny, for a lead from the Nizam of Hyderabad, the descendant of Abu Bakr, the first of all the Caliphs. Like his predecessors, the Nizam gave his support to the English. The English in their turn showered honours and distinctions upon him. He was raised above all other Princes in India and granted the special appellation of His Exalted Highness. He was called the "Faithful Ally of the British Government." He was not the only Mohammadan Prince to acquire additional importance because the British Government wanted Mohammadan to incite Mohammadan and to establish the belief that none was greater than the British Emperor of India. But the English did not give titles without exacting concessions: the Faithful Ally ceased to be his own Chief Minister.

The Nizam's predecessors outlived the Moghul Empire. He has himself outlived the Caliphate. As the hopes of the Indian Khilafatists vanished, the ambitions of the Faithful Ally increased. For where

## THE FAITHFUL ALLY

was there a Mohammadan ruler greater than he? Was he not now the first of all the Mohammadans? The Nizam had been bullied and badgered in the past. The Faithful Ally would reveal his strength. He would begin by demanding the return of the Garden of the Deccan, and, unfortunately, he chose to make his demand while Lord Reading was still the Viceroy. Not only was Lord Reading himself a prince among lawyers, but he happened to be served by at least one extremely able Law Member. The Nizam was told in the first place that the matter had been settled by the Government and could not be reopened. The Faithful Ally replied by denying that the Crown could make a unilateral settlement. Hyderabad, he said, ceded to the British Government merely the control of her foreign relations. When it came to internal politics—and Berar was held to be an internal affair—the Crown and the State met as equals. Inevitably, the controversy involved the status of paramountcy, and Lord Reading had the last word. Paramountcy was paramount.

Dominative government had triumphed. The long controversy, so Simla believed, was ended. But the Faithful Ally could afford to wait. Sooner or later an appeal for help from the Government of India was bound to come. The Faithful Ally had, for one thing, the sympathy of his brother Princes, who saw in the Nizam's defeat the humiliation of their own Order. The Princes were drawn together in fear and resentment, and, almost for the first time, they considered the prospects of Federation, so that their voice and influence throughout India might be strengthened. The Faithful Ally abandoned none of his ambitions. He married his elder son and heir to the daughter of the ex-Caliph, and the Government of India, which

## HIS HIGHNESS

has invariably insisted that the heir to every *gadi* shall be of pure Indian descent, did not forbid the marriage. Some day there will ascend to the throne of Hyderabad a Prince who claims the first and the last of the Caliphs for his ancestors. He may become himself the Caliph. He will hug no longer the appellation of His Exalted Highness or the title of the Faithful Ally of the British Government. Hyderabad will be greater than Delhi, greater than Constantinople. Who knows? Will the Caliphate never return? Will the Moghul Empire never return? The British *raj* is not eternal. Allah rewards the faithful, though the British Government may not.

The Faithful Ally's defeat was to provide him with his opportunity; for the first session of the Round Table Conference made it clear that the future Government of India would be a Federation. The Princes would enter, but on their own terms. At the Conference the Nizam's spokesman was his Finance Minister, Sir Akbar Hydari, a Mohammadan from British India, who quickly realized that the Princes and the British Government were expecting a lead from Hyderabad. Once Hyderabad agreed to enter the Federation, a federal Government was a certainty. So long as Hyderabad withheld her decision, a large number of Princes would also withhold theirs. Sir Akbar Hydari was in a key position, and every statement which he made at the Conference was closely studied. It was soon obvious that the Government of India would have to reopen the controversy which, according to Lord Reading, Lord Curzon had brought definitely to an end. The Faithful Ally was making his last bid for the Garden of the Deccan.

The Government had only to refuse the Faithful Ally's demand, and Hyderabad, the premier State and

## THE FAITHFUL ALLY

the key-State, would not have become a member of the Federation. It had only to return the rich provinces to Hyderabad, and the political leaders of British India would have been outraged. For the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms are said to have implanted the seeds of democracy throughout India, and it would be intolerable that the inhabitants of the Berars, acquainted with the advantages of provincial representation, should suddenly find themselves enveloped in a State which is a compromise between a Mohammadan autocracy and a Mohammadan oligarchy. The greater number of the Nizam's subjects are Hindus. They may be content—happier, in fact, than the “much administered man” of the British Provinces. There is nevertheless a deep cleavage between the Mohammadans and the Hindus of the Deccan. The Hindus are the peasantry. The Mohammadans are the governing class. The Mohammadan nobility prefers living in the busy and crowded city of Hyderabad to living on its estates in the Deccan. The Rolls Royce can seldom travel so far away from the city as the ancient Buick. Contact with the land is practically destroyed. When Asaf Jah had to defend his country from the Mahratta chieftains and the uncoloured intruders from the sea his nobility were eager fighters. The *Pax Britannica* has undermined their vitality. Poor Mohammadans take to trade, but never to the land. A peasants' revolt in Hyderabad would quickly become the worst communal war India is ever likely to witness. But the Hyderabad Moham-madan, however conscious of his governing status, is tolerant and well-disposed to the peasantry. Only thus can a million Mohammadans live in a country where more than twelve millions are Hindus. Of these twelve millions at least two millions are Un-



## HIS HIGHNESS

touchables. The Mohammadan aristocracy might have sought to make them Mohammadans as well. Tipu Sultan conferred the "honour of Islam" upon the outcasts of Malabar, and to-day their descendants are fanatical Mohammadans. The Hyderabad Moham-madans prefer to leave the Untouchables alone, though the creation of a Mohammadan peasantry is obviously desirable. It is a humiliating thought that no conversions among the Untouchables of Hyderabad could be attempted without stirring the communal fires throughout India. Yet it is indifference, rather than fear, which has caused the Hyderabad Moham-madans to refrain from converting the Untouchables. They have no conscious antipathy to the Hindus, and no one is held in greater esteem than Sir Kirshan Pershad, who is a Hindu and the first nobleman of Hyderabad.

But there must be a limit to concessions. One could not justify the full return of territory to Hyderabad without also justifying the return of rich territories to Mysore and Baroda, for in both of these States the conditions of political freedom compare favourably with those of British India. It must be assumed that the people of Berar, having once tasted the freedom of the British Province, should wish to retain that freedom. How, then, were the rights of the inhabitants of Berar and the demands of the Faithful Ally to be adjusted? Dominative Government does not know the meaning of adjustment. But Lord Linlithgow, like Lord Irwin, knows how to combine fidelity to principle with the give-and-take of politics. He knows, in fact, how to enforce government by consent, and the controversy which ended first of all in 1853 was declared to be once more at an end in the late autumn of 1936. And it was ended by the agreement that

## THE FAITHFUL ALLY

henceforward the Faithful Ally should be His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar, and that his eldest son, Sahibzada Azam Jah, should be the hereditary Prince of Berar. The Nizam's sovereignty over Berar is recognized, but Berar is now an administrative part of the Central Provinces, whose Governor has become Governor of the Central Provinces and Berar. The Nizam's flag flies in Berar alongside the British flag. With the concurrence of the Viceroy the Nizam can hold durbars in Berar.

So the little man sits at the back of his Buick car and he is free to recall his own Persian love-lyrics. The gift of poetry leaves men in their springtime, and perhaps the ruler dreams instead of a Hyderabad which has become the world's chief centre of Mohammadan culture. So strong is the dream, he does not reflect that even peasants may have their rights and that in a conflict between Mohammadan aristocracy and Hindu peasantry he will find no Hyderabad middle-class to withstand the shock. The Faithful Ally has acquired new titles and honours. He has regained the title deeds of the Garden of the Deccan. Does it matter that the British are still the gardeners or that the owner can enter only when the Viceroy chooses to unlock the gate? It is something to be able to fly one's own flag, even on what may still appear to be Crown property.

## CHAPTER IX

### A RAJPUT AND THE FAVOURITE SON

A NUMBER of young English men and women had drunk their tea in the wide verandah, of a palace at the foot of Malabar Hill. They had toyed with their sandwiches, for tea is no ceremonial meal in India, and they were waiting for their host, who led them across the lawn to the terrace, against whose walls the waves of the Arabian Sea were being furiously beaten. From the main buildings of the palace two wings thrust themselves towards the sea. 'An elaborately carved stone-lattice covered its windows and doorways, and the young English people were left to guess how many Eastern ladies were regarding them, though themselves unobserved, from behind the lattices. The ladies could not have found the little function altogether diverting, for the lord of their palace discussed nothing but politics. He had supported the cause of Federation at the first session of the Round Table Conference. He had watched with critical approval the conversations between Lord Irwin and Mr. Gandhi. He may have believed that Congress itself would soon acknowledge his own statesmanship and that it would be his lead which the Princes of India followed at the next session of the Round Table Conference. And now the Maharajah of Patiala, who had backed him at the first session, was denouncing Federation. The Maharajah of Bikanir was deeply vexed.

There was soon to be in the columns of the *Times of India* a long refutation of what the Maharajah of

## A RAJPUT AND THE FAVOURITE SON

Patiala had said and done. Point after point in the Maharajah's statement would be taken up and shown by his brother of Bikanir to be illogical and unsound. But the writing of so long a refutation took time. Meanwhile, the Maharajah of Bikanir entertained his young English guests, all of whom were expressing their concern for India's future. They were the politically-minded Young Europeans, who claimed that their outlook differed radically from the outlook of the pre-war generation and who gave dinners with a disarming indiscrimination to Princes, millowners, Labour leaders, delegates to the Round Table Conference, women social workers and Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru. They came, willingly enough, to hear what the Maharajah of Bikanir wanted to say. So they sat on the lawn, hearing nothing but the Maharajah's voice and the lashing of the monsoon waves. It did not matter that they were still on the lawn, already wet with dew, when the hour sacred to dinner in Bombay had come and almost gone. They were there to learn.

Soon the long refutation appeared. What good it may have done, only those who read it through could have told. Hitherto the Maharajah of Patiala's attitude seemed simple to explain. In London he thought that Federation was a good idea. Back in his own State he thought again and changed his mind. He gathered round him other Princes who disliked the idea of Federation or whose minds were not made up. He held one conference after another, and as the Maharajah of Patiala, heavily bejewelled, walked through the corridors of the Taj Mahal Hotel in Bombay, he greeted his friends, English and Indian, with a delightful informality. His wit and gaiety never left him. His sense of fun was infectious. It was difficult to

## HIS HIGHNESS

believe that he could ever take these tedious conferences seriously, even though he summoned them himself.

But for the Maharajah of Bikanir work is a religion. The Maharajah of Patiala has been called the Disraeli of India. He is like him in the gaudiness of his dress and his undisguised pleasure in ostentation. He is like him too in his cynical detachment, his scorn for cant, his refusal to impose upon himself or upon others more work than is actually necessary. If the Maharajah of Patiala is the Disraeli of India, the Maharajah of Bikanir is her Gladstone. He is like Gladstone in his conscientious and whole-hearted industry. He is like him in his tall, strong build and the attractive *timbre* of his voice, and he is like him in the width of his sympathies, in the range of his knowledge; above all, in his profound veneration for the throne of England. Queen Victoria distrusted and eventually hated Gladstone: King George made the Maharajah of Bikanir his friend. That friendship was to work wonders.

The likenesses between Gladstone and the Maharajah of Bikanir, though striking, are strictly limited. None of the Maharajah's apologists have argued that he has any consuming passion for social righteousness, still less any conviction that the will of the people must prevail. He is devoted to the princely Order to which he belongs and he is proud of his Rajput ancestry. He is conscious of his Royal status. He can resent a slight. He is charming to Indian and Englishman alike and he entertains them lavishly in Bikanir, in Delhi, in Bombay. He is unfailing in his correspondence with them. But they never forget that he is a ruling Prince. The tall figure, the fine raiment, the bearing of a Lieutenant-General still on the Active List, have made him a familiar personage in London.

## A RAJPUT AND THE FAVOURITE SON

For a long time he was the Indian Prince best-known to the Londoner. The Nizam of Hyderabad and Berar has never visited England, the Maharajah of Mysore did not see London until last year, and none of the Maharajah of Kashmir's predecessors left the shores of India. It was easy, therefore, for the Londoner to enhance the importance of the Maharajah of Bikanir and to recognize him as he drove with members of the English Royal Family to St. Paul's Cathedral for King George's Silver Jubilee service. He represented India at the Imperial War Conference in 1917. He was a signatory to the Treaty of Versailles and a delegate to the League of Nations. It was not his fault that his work in Paris or Geneva has won no gratitude, and practically no recognition, from his countrymen.

The Maharajah of Bikanir is not a Gladstone in his spirit, and yet he is very nearly a Gladstone in his political understanding. He sees farther ahead than any of his brother-Princes. He never forgets that British India and the India of the States are one. He knows that new ideas sweep across British India and find no permanent barriers in the States. His friends in British India are statesmen of the Liberal school whose guiding principles come from nineteenth-century England, and who can quote long passages from the writings of John Stuart Mill. He sees how those guiding principles have been challenged first by Mahatma Gandhi and now by Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru. He hears the demands of the various States' subjects and he realizes that unless the princely Order knows how to meet new ideas and new conditions, it is doomed. The destiny of the princely Order, so he would argue, is limited monarchy. He is too intelligent to believe that autocracy can endure. He is also too intelligent to be himself a limited monarch.

## HIS HIGHNESS

His environment, his contacts with Sandringham and Congress House, Sandhurst and the Legislature in Delhi, have made him a progressive Conservative, but not a Tory democrat. He accepted whole-heartedly the suzerainty of King George the Fifth, and he would never allow more than five years to pass without voyaging to England to see his Emperor. Yet his intelligence told him that the Princes must deliver themselves from the bondage of British Delhi and heed the Congress voices. It was not the mission of the Princes to set themselves in permanent opposition to the British Provinces, and few of them had any genuine affection for the paramount Power. When the Faithful Ally resented the loss of the Garden of the Deccan and Lord Reading's ruthless reminder that paramountcy was paramount, the Maharajah of Bikanir understood his feelings. He understood the distress of the Maharajah of Mysore that the Government of India had made no effort to remit Richard Wellesley's subsidy. He realized also that the Princes had sympathies as well as sympathizers within the Congress camp. The majority of them are Hindus. Their personal rule might be reactionary, but they could not always prevent the princelings and the men at leisure in their courts from following the *satyagraha* movement beyond the borders of their States. They encountered the Congress volunteers whenever they made excursions to Delhi or took part in the tiresome conferences in Bombay. They offered sympathy where they could not summon spiritual conviction. It was not alone Versailles in the eighteenth century who welcomed the enlightenment which was to destroy the enlightened together with the blind. British India led the way, and sooner or later the States were bound to follow. And the Maharajah of Bikanir,

## A RAJPUT AND THE FAVOURITE SON

recognizing the implications of the *satyagraha* movement, came to an understanding with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. When he attended the Round Table Conference, he would not speak of Dominion Status. He would speak instead of Federation. He would make it clear that while the Princes were disposed to federate, they would permit no severance from Great Britain. Federation was to bind all India to the throne. George the Fifth was Emperor of India. The Maharajah of Bikanir fully deserved his Emperor's friendship.

There were, however, some unfortunate limits to his success. The State of Bikanir is not rich. The guest who arrives at the palace may be impressed by the trappings, the furniture, the food and wine. He may admire the livery, the fine horses, the well-disciplined Camel Corps. But the unrivalled sand-grouse shooting should remind him that sand, after all, is Bikanir's principal commodity. The State comprises only twenty-three thousand square miles, of which several thousand square miles are unproductive desert. The acres of Bikanir, like its finances, need constant vigilance if the State is not to drift into barrenness. Fortunately for his subjects, the autocrat who anticipates limited monarchy has worked even more diligently in his own State than in the political life of India. Bold co-operation with the neighbouring Government of the Punjab has enabled him to benefit from the Sutlej irrigation scheme. A canal has led to the colonization of a vast track of the country, and the State has sold several million pounds' worth of this recently redeemed land. The population of the State is increasing and now numbers nearly a million. Many thousands of the immigrants have come from the Punjab, where agricultural poverty is chronic.

Twenty-three thousand square miles and a million



subjects are not, it must be confessed, figures likely to impress the Faithful Ally or the Maharajah of Mysore. Hyderabad and Mysore stand apart. They are equivalent in size and importance to more than one British Province. They take no part in the proceedings of the Chamber of Princes. They hug their special grievances with the Government of India, and they had no intention of playing a personal part in the proceedings of the Round Table Conference, to which they sent their Ministers. Thus the Maharajah of Bikanir's prominence at the Round Table Conference was in one sense unreal. It was as though the Prime Minister of Newfoundland so dominated the proceedings of an Imperial Conference that the Prime Ministers of the Dominions had constantly to remind him that Newfoundland was the oldest, but not the most important, region of the overseas Empire.

There were other Princes, apart from the Faithful Ally and the Maharajah of Mysore, who might have resented the prominence which the Maharajah of Bikanir acquired at the first session of the Round Table Conference. There was the Maharajah Gaekwar of Baroda, whose Mahratta ancestors were traditionally scornful of the Rajputs, whose country the British have never conquered and on whom Queen Victoria bestowed the title of the Favourite Son. He has his grievances, like the Faithful Ally, for the British submitted his unconquered territories to a merciless pruning. The Favourite Son causes his State to be administered with the utmost efficiency. He has made primary education free and compulsory. He has declared an honorific war upon the evils of Untouchability, which are rampant throughout Baroda. He has done what Mr. Gandhi wishes to do for British India and made the village *panchayat*—an

## A RAJPUT AND THE FAVOURITE SON

institution not dissimilar to the witenagemot—the foundation of the government. The *panchayat* chooses the representatives for the Legislative Council, and the Favourite Son—though often residing, like the Emperor and the Secretary of State, near the reaches of the Thames—is the apex of the administrative pyramid.

The Favourite Son has subjects who are constantly visiting cities like Bombay and Ahmedabad and who know what people in the turbulent Presidency of Bombay are thinking. The dynasty is Mahratta, but the people are Gujeratis, and Mr. Gandhi's influence happens to be strongest in Gujerat. The Maharajah of Bikanir, on the other hand, is the apex of a feudal State, and his nobility are so wedded to Rajput ideas of government that many decades are likely to pass before a ruler of Bikanir, fulfilling his ancestor's prophecy, consents to become a limited monarch. Then, should not the Favourite Son have spoken more plainly than the Maharajah of Bikanir? But the Favourite Son followed the example of the Faithful Ally and made his Dewan, Sir Krishnama Chari, the spokesman of Baroda. Unfortunately, the Maharajah of Bikanir is not even the leading Prince of Rajputana, for that distinction must necessarily belong to the Maharana of Udaipur, since he happens to descend from the Sun. The Descendant of the Sun rules over a State which was already a thousand years old when Nizam Asaf Jah created a kingdom for himself on the heights of the Deccan. That *parvenu* dynasty has found lustre added to its name, and the Faithful Ally has become the Premier Prince of India. The Descendant of the Sun can make nothing of such crazy notions, and so he keeps to his water palace.

There were other Princes who attended the Round

## HIS HIGHNESS

Table Conference only to encounter the same difficulties as the Maharajah of Bikanir. As they sat round the Conference table they were unable to hide either their virtues or their shortcomings. But the Ministers who represented Princes even more exalted than their rivals presented endless problems. In a rash moment an autocrat at the Conference table might appear to have committed his dynasty and his State to an irrevocable decision. The Ministers could argue and refute. They could enmesh the autocrats in legal niceties, but they were careful never to exceed their briefs. Before the second session of the Round Table Conference had run its course, the position became intolerable. The Maharajah of Bikanir spent a few days at Sandringham and then sailed eastwards. At the third session of the Round Table Conference no Princes were present. They were represented by their Ministers. The Princes remained in India, where they disputed among themselves and endeavoured, before making any irrevocable decision to enter the Federation, to obtain the most favourable terms from the Viceroy and the Government of India. There were endless conferences between them, which pleased the politically-minded but bored those whose minds are apt to be distracted by dancing-girls and polo ponies. A Prince whose wit led to European fame and whose extravagances subsequently led to exile, received an urgent summons to attend a Conference in Bombay. He sent an eight-page telegram confessing that he had no love for politics, but that love for his brother Princes would force him to leave Mount Abu for Bombay. He sent a second telegram declaring that the weather could not be better in Mount Abu and could not be worse in Bombay: nevertheless he would come. He sent a third telegram announcing his intention to order a

## A RAJPUT AND THE FAVOURITE SON

special train. He sent a fourth telegram, which was to inform his brother Princes at what time the special train would leave Abu Road, and at what time it would arrive in Bombay. A fifth telegram announced that the special train had left Abu Road with fitting punctuality. Then came the sixth and final telegram: "Regret have missed my special."

The elimination of the Princes from the Round Table Conference did not mean that Londoners ceased to hear about them, for the Indian Princes can always command a good Press in London and even in the Provinces. There is the Maharajah of Kashmir, whose oligarchy of Brahman Pandits rule over a people predominantly Mohammadan: he plays a very good game of polo. There is the Maharajah of Jodhpur, who hunts and flies and plays polo. There is the Maharajah of Gwalior, who plays hockey and tennis as well as polo. There is the Maharajah of Kapurthala, who has advanced from polo to the athletic feat of winning the Derby, and there is the Maharajah of Jaipur, who happens to be one of the best polo-players in the world. These are manly rulers about whom the English love to read. They have unhappily their failures. There is the former Maharajah of Indore, whose father had a weakness for driving Brahman bankers round his own race-course, and who lost his throne because of an attempt to kidnap a dancing-girl near the official residence of the Bishop of Bombay: he played polo.

Polo is a Rajput game. It is also a clean game, and so the English encourage it. They believe it to be their duty to educate the Princes and all likely heirs with the greatest care. The Faithful Ally and the Maharajah of Bikanir had the same tutor, Sir Brian Egerton. There are colleges for the sons of Princes,

## HIS HIGHNESS

where the training is thorough and where the teaching of history is not unduly stressed, so that it takes some time before the less intelligent princelings discover that the English have cast from their thrones the Nāwabs of Bengal and Arcot, the King of Oudh, the Moghul Emperor of India, that they have annexed the domains which once belonged to Ranjit Singh and seized the territories of the ruler of Satara merely because he had left no direct heir. The English, in fact, took all that it was convenient for them to take. They would have taken very much more if they had not profited from a few of the lessons of the Mutiny. Though they have left the remaining States, Lord Curzon was able to give the Premier Prince, the Favourite Son and the Descendant of the Sun the uncomfortable impression that they were left only on sufferance. The princelings, however untutored in their history, take to polo easily enough, but they are less successful in other activities, and when an Englishman waves a pole and shakes his scraggy knees, they know that he is about to utter some incomprehensible war-cry. It is left to princelings to discover why this barbaric ritual should be conducive to one good deed a day. Muscular Christianity can go sadly astray in Hindustan.

The aristocrats of Bengal and Oudh and the Punjab are more fortunate. They have been deprived of their ruling dynasties, but the paramount Power does not directly curb their education. They can receive their instruction in the traditional manner, and whenever they want Western influences, their young men can go to Balliol and their young women to Somerville. They can play polo and hear no English tutor commenting upon their strokes as though he secretly believed that polo was a corruption of cricket. It

## A RAJPUT AND THE FAVOURITE SON

may well be that the isolation of the young Princes from the aristocrats of British India has made them more amenable to advice from the British Residency, and yet it has not helped to establish a more effective partnership between the States and the provinces of British India. It is, in fact, not surprising that many Princes have seen in Federation an unrivalled opportunity for ridding themselves of the Government of India's Political Department. The members of this Department are the link between the Prince and the Viceroy. They live in a Residency which is sometimes in unwelcome proximity to the Palace. They often know far more than the Prince wishes them to know. They are the restraining influence upon autocracy, and the Residency is the constant reminder of the paramountcy of the Crown. The members of the Political Department are bound to exercise sympathy and tact, and there are times when discretion bids them to observe silence, though the action, or inaction, of the Prince and his Ministers deeply offends their own standards of political behaviour. Often a sense of humour will save them from many difficult encounters with the Prince, though a sense of humour appears to have been denied to the Political Officer who, riding on an elephant side by side with an elephant on which rode the Favourite Son, complained that throughout the procession the Gaekwar's elephant succeeded in keeping a foot in advance of his own. A Prince may like the Resident, but he usually detests the Residency, for without a doubt the Political Department represents a network for Imperial espionage. The Residency gives the Prince a sense of inferiority, and the sense of inferiority drives him to increase his personal splendour. He will go to Delhi to take part in the proceedings of

## HIS HIGHNESS

the Chamber of Princes. Here the Princes are expected to discuss great affairs of State. Many of them, however, prefer to argue whether a Prince who is given an official salute of eleven guns should not take precedence over a provincial Governor, or whether the Emperor should not turn out his guard whenever such a gun-shot potentate arrives at Buckingham Palace.

The enlightened Prince is at the mercy of his own Order. The hereditary principle does not ensure ability or industry or character. What has happened in Indore may happen again in other States, and the kidnapper is not necessarily concerned with dancing-girls. Some unworthy successor to the Maharajah of Mysore could swiftly destroy the traditions of beneficent government, since the Maharajah's Ministers are responsible to their ruler and not to the Legislature. Some indolent successor to the Maharajah of Bikanir could corrupt the State's finances and allow productive acres to yield their soil to the desert. The chief advantage of the hereditary principle is that some of the States can hope for a better ruler than they possess at the present time. There was a Prince who brought misfortune to his subjects because he insisted upon carrying the State budget in his head. There was a Prince who never set foot in his palace until the omens were propitious, so that the soothsayers often compelled him to camp in the palace grounds. There was a Prince who resolved to be a model ruler and took with him all the State papers as he journeyed by sea from Bombay to Karachi. The voyage and his duties soon became irksome: the State papers went overboard. There was a Prince who entered the *zenana* and could not be disturbed, though his subjects were crying in the market place for an immediate attention

## A RAJPUT AND THE FAVOURITE SON

to justice; and there was a Prince who delighted in watching the behaviour of a condemned man on the eve of his execution. There are States where the manager of an amusement hall can receive an additional salary of ten pounds a year for acting as the Chief Justice, and there was once a prominent barrister from British India who pleaded before a conventionally-robed Judge for a day and a half before it dawned upon him that his sleeping lordship spoke no English.

So long as one's attention is directed to the larger States one understands the loyalty which subjects may show to their ruler. In some ways the larger States are more advanced than British India. Hyderabad rarely applies the death sentence, and murder is no more frequent among the Nizam's subjects than it is in other parts of India. Baroda has more advanced schemes for education than several of the British provinces. The limelight of publicity plays upon the larger States and they develop a pride in representative institutions and a confidence in the integrity of the administration. More than one Dewan has discovered the art of window-dressing the achievements of his State, and Mysore has gone the length of appointing a Trade Commissioner in London. Few observers find any grievance with Travancore, where more than a million and a half Indian Christians live side by side with Mohammadans and Hindus, where *purdah* is not encouraged, where the ruler is content with a modest Civil List, and where Mr. Gandhi's preaching has led to a vigorous attack upon Untouchability.

It is in the small forgotten States that evil is deeply rooted and the seduction of girl or boy can become the passport to influence. Some of the States in Kathiawar are minute. They comprise only a few



## HIS HIGHNESS

thousand acres, and one of the Kathiawari Highnesses is said to be the sovereign of nothing larger than a well. If the Emperors, the Nawabs of Bengal, the Kings of Oudh, the rulers of the Punjab can go, why should the princelets of Kathiawar remain? It is a question which Liberals and Congressmen have constantly asked each other. It has puzzled even those Kathiawari Princes who may be gifted with intelligence. And the question was asked often enough when Congressmen made their way to a remote district in West Khandesh during the Christmas week of 1936. They had assembled to hear the presidential address of Jawaharlal Nehru, and this Kashmiri Pandit did not spare the States. He let their rulers know that they were the inheritors of a medieval society which could find no place in the new India. From that copiously reported speech there was no escape. Before the Christmas week gave way to the New Year, the Kathiawari rulers were anxiously communicating with each other. They remembered the warning of the Maharajah of Bikanir. It was well to make terms with British India while they could, and it was better to rule as limited monarchs than not to rule at all.

## CHAPTER X

### THE DANGERS OF ELIMINATION

THE Congress attack upon the Indian States and their rulers is a comparatively recent development. Older Congressmen preferred to leave them alone. They seldom forgot that the rulers were Indians and that their rule was indigenous. So long as they rule, they disprove the stubborn theory that Indians are incapable of governing Indians. Every exposure of misgovernment is thus a surrender to the critics. They did not like the abdication of the former Maharajah of Indore. Attacks upon the Princes used to hurt them. There was a Prince who heard that Congress agitation was spreading within the borders of his State, and without any appreciable delay he took action. He ordered the leading agitators to be arrested and then strung up by their feet in the market place. There they remained, wriggling and swaying in the wind until they promised to forswear all their Congress activities and to devote the rest of their lives to the service of the Prince. Nothing would have tempted them to face this extremely painful torture for a second time, and the Prince appears never to have been troubled by Congress agitation again. The older Congressmen have said nothing about this incident. The simplicity as well as the effectiveness of the punishment may have amused them, and for obvious reasons it is advisable to confine one's attacks to the conduct of the police and to convince the people that the British *raj* is a police *raj*.

## HIS HIGHNESS

Mr. Gandhi himself treads warily. He is a States' subject and not a British subject. He was born in Porbandar, one of the Kathiawari States, in which his father was the Dewan. His grandfather was a former Dewan, and so was one of his uncles. Both his grandfather and his father had ended by quarrelling with their Prince and becoming the Dewans of other Kathiawari rivals, a state of affairs which suggests that unswerving loyalty to their own Prince in Porbandar was not a cardinal doctrine with members of the Gandhi family. The family wished that Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi should follow in the steps of his father, his grandfather and his uncle and become the Dewan of Porbandar. Lack of ability, however, seemed to stand in his way. He failed to distinguish himself either at his school in Porbandar or at a college in the neighbouring State of Bhawnagar. The family in despair turned to an old Brahman for advice. He told them that the boy should complete his education in England. The English send the fool of the family to India: let the Indians send the fool of the family to England. The Brahman was wise.

A training at the English Bar might not equip a young Kathiawari with superior ability, but it would increase his social prestige. He would acquire an outward manner likely to impress the Prince, upon whom the succession to the family office seemed to depend. Unfortunately, the Political Department rudely upset these naive calculations. Imperial espionage had been at work, and the Political Department decided—no doubt, with reluctance—that there must be some definite change and improvements. The young barrister returned to Porbandar from London and discovered that the Gandhi family were no longer favoured by the men in authority. He tried to earn

## THE DANGERS OF ELIMINATION

his living in Kathiawar, but without success. He migrated to Bombay, and again his efforts to earn an income were unsuccessful. It was as a measure of despair that he set sail for South Africa, where his life's work was actually to begin. For more than twenty years he laboured in a country troubled by many grievances and by distressing situations which demanded constant adjustments between the claims of Asiatic and European. He was to receive the training which fitted him to be the chief representative of India after the war. But South Africa never presented him with a problem comparable to the uneven partnership between the Indian States and British India. Just because this partnership did not present itself as a baffling problem to Mr. Gandhi in his productive middle years, it does not present itself as a baffling problem now. Mr. Gandhi's mind is experimental, but it is not altogether expansive. When he last visited Mysore, he gave no indication of unfriendliness. He was, on the contrary, unsparing in his praises. "This is *Ram Raj*," he kept on saying, and *Ram Raj*—a paradise on earth—is what he wishes to establish in the so-called British India.

This reluctance to interfere with the States Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru does not share. He belongs to a distinguished and wealthy family of Kashmiri Brahmans, and numbers among his kinsmen Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, a principal architect of Federation, and Sir K. N. Haksar, Secretary-General to the States' Delegation at the Round Table Conference. The Kashmiri Brahmans have exerted an influence in the States and in British India which is out of all proportion to their numbers. They have held their lands in Kashmir for countless generations. They have witnessed the triumph and defeat of one invader after another.

## HIS HIGHNESS

They have faced changing conditions in Kashmir and made terms with new conquerors. Always their tenacity and ability have reaped a full reward. They are an aristocracy of brains. The princely incomes which men like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Pandit Motilal Nehru, father of the Congress leader, derived from the Allahabad Bar have made them something of a plutocracy as well. It cannot have been easy for these Kashmiri Brahmans to maintain their ascendancy when the people of Kashmir forsook their Hinduism for the Mohammadan faith, when Akbar made Srinagar his summer resort and when the country fell under the yoke of Ranjit Singh. But as soon as the English had annexed the Punjab they were willing to sell remote Kashmir to Gulab Singh, member of a former Hindu dynasty, and under his successors the Kashmiri Brahmans have flourished exceedingly. They are an oligarchy divorced from the people of Kashmir. The Kashmiris may not have been whole-hearted converts to Islam, for a Hindu culture still lingers in their countryside. The Royal House has nevertheless returned to Srinagar as a stranger. Discontent is rampant. The Maharajah has made genuine attempts to placate his Mohammadan subjects. He has given wide powers to his Prime Minister and established a Legislature in which his Mohammadan subjects can claim to be represented. Yet there is still a prevalent feeling that the Royal House has no permanence: Bourbons can make only temporary returns. The Kashmiri Brahmans serve their Prince with the utmost fidelity. They will hear no word against him, and they can point to the useful work which they have themselves accomplished. They could do more, but they believe that they are hampered by the system which makes the Residency responsible for the conduct and

## THE DANGERS OF ELIMINATION

welfare of the English inhabitants who happen to be rather numerous. It tends to establish a *raj* parallel to the Prince's *raj*—a well-worn complaint. The fundamental difficulty is that Kashmir has a Hindu dynasty islanded in a Mohammadan world. There is a rough geographical division between Mohammadan India in the North and Hindu India in the South, so that a Hindu dynasty in Kashmir is as much an anomaly as a Mohammadan dynasty in Hyderabad.

There are, however, important differences. The dynasties and fortunes of Kashmir have changed. The people forsook, though half-heartedly, their ancient faith, and they are conscious of the religious barrier between themselves and the ruler and the oligarchy. The oligarchy itself is conscious of caste. Not for many centuries have the people of Hyderabad changed their faith. The Moghul Viceroy arrived, and it was eventually accepted that he represented the power and splendour of Delhi. He helped to make them one with the other peoples of India, and when he converted himself into a King he sought to give his people peace. The Hyderabad Mohamman has many grievous faults. He belongs to an exclusive class which has long since blunted its fighting qualities. He has the misfortune to prefer life in the city of Hyderabad to life in the country. His is the mentality of the absentee *rentier*, and the silver-lined Rolls Royce cars which cruise through the streets of Hyderabad are a dangerous symptom. The Hyderabad nobleman should have thought less about the Garden of the Deccan and more about the Provinces which still remained within the dominions of the Faithful Ally. Caste separates the Hindu oligarchy from the Mohammadan peasantry in Kashmir, but in Hyderabad the distinction between Mohammadan and Hindu is primarily social and

## HIS HIGHNESS

economic, and if a Hindu has been fortunate to receive ennoblement from the Faithful Ally he finds that his peers are in truth his equals. The Hyderabad nobleman treats the peasant as the Anglo-Irish landlord treats his Catholic servant, as a man who prefers a comradely discourse on horseflesh to the payment of a living wage. He treats the Hindu who has been ennobled as the Anglo-Irish landlord treats a Catholic Peer, as a man who is useful for introductions in London and deserves, therefore, to be a Protestant. But to a Kashmiri Brahman a Mohammadan nobility is almost a contradiction in terms. A communal storm could displace the Kashmiri dynasty or else make its continued existence dependent upon British bayonets; but a change of dynasty in Hyderabad would depend upon a social and economic upheaval hitherto without precedent in the history of the country. It is possible to argue that there is government by consent in Hyderabad, though it is a view which these Mahrattas who live in the Deccan would keenly dispute. For all the fidelity and hard industry of the Kashmiri Brahmans and the creation of a representative Legislature, it is far less easy to argue that there is government by consent in Kashmir. Her governors are often more reasonable than the governed, but so long as the Hindu dynasty remains, the government must continue to be dominative.

The British were glad to sell Kashmir to Gulab Singh. They needed hard cash to effect the pacification of the Punjab. The sale of Kashmir was nevertheless a flagrant misuse of authority. It implied that some millions of Mohammadans could belong body and soul to a Prince who had a purse long enough to buy off the British. Like Germans in the seventeenth century, Indians in the nineteenth century could be thrown

## THE DANGERS OF ELIMINATION

from one devouring Prince to another. Their welfare and their happiness, the safety of their limbs and the protection of their homes were matters beyond the ken of Englishmen struggling to consolidate their own position in India. Had Gulab Singh become Maharajah of Kashmir on the same terms that Lord Ripon was eventually to reinstate a Maharajah of Mysore, had he been no more than a decorative agent of the Viceroy, little harm might have been done. But Gulab Singh acquired Kashmir more or less as an absolute ruler. The people of Kashmir had no rights beyond those which their purchaser chose to grant them. Yet in the twentieth century three Viceroys declined to give back the Garden of the Deccan to the Nizam because the people who live in the Berars have grown accustomed to British rule and are identified politically with the Central Provinces. They refused because they recognized that subjects have their rights. That recognition goes to the root of the problem.

Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru has lived among men from whom few of the secrets of government in the States have been hidden. He knows how men are ensnared by the combinations of autocratic rule and oligarchic opinion and how they struggle in vain against the endless ramifications of intrigue. He knows also how dissimulation and flattery lead to influence and how the purse diverts the course of justice. Moreover, he sees in the inevitable Federation the marshalling of all the forces of conservatism and reaction against the forces of progress. The Princes, seduced from their former isolation, will manipulate the Federal Legislature to their own advantage. Conservatism and reaction will harden in a different mould. The Princes will ally with the Englishmen, the commercial magnates, the Anglo-Indians, the Sikhs and the Untouch-



## HIS HIGHNESS

ables to thwart the wishes of the Congress. They will discover, as Englishmen have discovered before them, that the sum of all the minorities is greater than the majority. They will know how to sow dissension, though Congressmen will not overlook the Princes' genius for sowing dissension among themselves. Mr. Nehru can tell a few familiar truths about the Princes. A few of them are exceptional men. Some rule with marked sympathy and ability. Others are adroitly managed by their Dewans or walk in legitimate fear of the Residency. But for the most part they are as much an embarrassment to nationalist India as the German States and principalities were to the nationalist Germany. The more India becomes a consciously united country—and the new federal structure marks an important advance in nation-building—the more she will resent the perpetuation of a medieval heritage like princely rule in the States. Some of the Princes are bound to go. They will go because, as Lord Linlithgow tacitly admitted when he granted the Nizam sovereignty without even the shadow of power in the Berars, the States' subjects have their rights.

It was within the rights of the Government of India to expel Mr. Gandhi from British India and dispatch him to the State of Porbandar, to which he belongs; but none can suppose that he would have pursued a useful career in that small State. The freedom which he has enjoyed for the greater number of his adult years is a freedom to which all other subjects in Porbandar should be entitled. If Parliamentary government has taken root at all in British India, it must sooner or later take root in the States. In the long run, it is the States' subjects, and not the Congress, who will decide whether the Princes are to remain or to go. In this decision geography and history will

## THE DANGERS OF ELIMINATION

play their part. The people of Kathiawar are intelligent and hard-working. They are in close contact with the politically-minded Gujeratis, and they will one day realize that the mosaic of little States is a drain upon their resources. They will combine to govern themselves. Their Princes may continue to reside in Kathiawar, but they will reside as a territorial nobility and not as rulers. There are, perhaps, many Englishmen who would keenly regret their passing and would extol their undoubted virtues. They may, however, remember that the Jam Saheb of Nawanagar who played such good cricket is no longer alive.

Although the Kathiawaris may eventually combine and govern themselves, it should not be assumed that they will wish to be incorporated in what is now the Presidency of Bombay. If many of the States are too small, the Presidencies and Provinces are too large. Until a few years ago the Presidency of Bombay bore no relation to geographical or racial realities. The city of Bombay itself was nothing but a group of islands cut off from a Mahratta mainland until the end of the eighteenth century. With the Mahratta defeat Bombay's territories were pushed northwards and southwards, though Mahratta Princes who had been of good behaviour, like the Maharajah of Kolhapur, or who were too powerful to be conquered, like the ancestor of the Favourite Son, retained their territories. Bombay pushed northwards until its Governor, Jonathan Duncan, found a host of landlords in Kathiawar, whom he invested with ruling powers. Later in the century Charles Napier conquered Sind and "pacified" it. After the pacification Sind became part of the Presidency of Bombay. So the Presidency of Bombay was composed of Mahrattas, Gujeratis and the warrior Mohammadans of Sind. They had nothing in common

## HIS HIGHNESS

with each other, and the suspicion of Mahratta towards Gujerati is often the source of conflict in the hybrid city of Bombay where Mahratta and Gujerati happen to meet, often for the first time.

At the second session of the Round Table Conference Mr. Ramsay MacDonald agreed that Sind should become a separate Province. He was, of course, making a concession to Mohammadan opinion. But the separation of Mahratta country from Gujerat appears never to have entered the realm of practical politics. Wealthy Congressmen who have made their fortunes in Bombay would not welcome a proposal to undermine the political ascendancy of Bombay. English officials would emphasize the cost and extravagance of the proposal: the two Provinces would have deficit Budgets: they would duplicate the expenses of administration and education. But if the Gaekwar of Baroda had been the Maharajah of Gujerat, and if the Peshwa of Poona had avoided the annexation of his domains, the English Press would be heard to praise the enlightenment of Gujerat and the statesmanship of Poona. They would argue that the subjects of the Maharajah of Gujerat and the subjects of the Peshwa of Poona were united people, and in all probability they would be right.

These people who are deprived of their own rulers often retain a separate identity, as the English discovered to their cost when Lord Curzon proposed to partition Bengal. The Gaekwar of Baroda is not altogether wrong when he argues that portions of Gujerat should be returned to him. The people of Mysore have experienced a certain measure of constitutional freedom. The chances are that they will not be content with what they have received and that the Maharajah, who has already made liberal conces-

## THE DANGERS OF ELIMINATION

sions, must concede far more. Movements in British India necessarily affect Mysore, and there will come a day when the Mysoreans insist that the Ministers shall be responsible to their Legislature and not to their Maharajah. The will of the people shall prevail. It is improbable, however, that the Mysoreans will consent to amalgamate with the Madras or that the Travancoreans, whose ruler has been driven far towards limited monarchy, will ever surrender their separate identity. Hyderabad is not likely to suffer partition, though there is a Mahratta element which remembers the achievements of the Peshwas and does not like its separation from Poona, now a fashionable, though remote, appendage of Bombay. The Kashmiris may succeed in changing their dynasty, but they will never acknowledge the Government of the Punjab as their own. Hyderabad, Kashmir, Mysore and Travancore are virtually separate nations. The Presidency of Bombay, the Presidency of Madras, the Central Provinces, the euphemistically styled United Provinces are, on the contrary, artificial creations, a conglomeration of districts knit together for the sake of administrative convenience. The provincial boundaries may have done little damage when the Government of India was still despotic, but the development of representative government has helped to expose their absurdity. Under the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms Mohamadans from Sind, Mahrattas from the Deccan highlands and Gujeratis from the fertile agricultural districts of the Western Coast were expected to meet in the Bombay Legislative Council and hammer out administrative measures for the common good of them all. Provincial government did not fail in Bombay only because the Sindhis, the Mahrattas and the Gujeratis showed remarkable restraint. The record

## HIS HIGHNESS

of communal disorder in Bombay might have been far worse than it was.

And yet by forcing the Sindhis, the Mahrattas and the Gujeratis to work together the Government of India was making an unconscious attack upon princely rule. They were creating a unity where hitherto no unity had existed, and they were helping to expose the archaic nature of government in Kathiawar. The more Bombay takes pride in its unity and the further the turbulent traditions of Mahrattā rule fade into history, the more the Bombay elector will resent the Mahratta principalities which are still islanded throughout the Provinces. The ruling Princes number at the present time some seven hundred. They are likely to be less than a hundred before the turn of the century. Hyderabad, Mysore and Travancore will remain to profit from the experiences of British India and to be in their turn examples for the Provinces to follow. But the little Highnesses who meet together in Bombay or Delhi, who discuss whether a Prince with eleven guns shall take precedence over an English Governor or put the Emperor to the trouble of turning out the Guard when he arrives at the gates of Buckingham Palace, who quarrel over the precedence within their own Order; these little Highnesses are doomed. They have waved their Treaties and *sanads* at an impervious Government of India and they have been cajoled into a Federation. In the Federal Legislature they will be compelled to hear speakers discussing the rights of their subjects. For, at least, the Government of India did not press these rights unduly. Injustice had to be flagrant before the conversation of a Political Officer wandered very far beyond polo style and batting averages. The former Maharajah of Indore might have known better than to allow a dancing-girl to be

## THE DANGERS OF ELIMINATION

kidnapped within reach of a Bishop's residence. The Congressmen will be watchful and eager to detect and expose every miscarriage of justice. From the States' subjects they will gain many converts. It is from the attacks within their own States that the Princes have most to fear.

## CHAPTER XI

### CORONATION DURBAR

CONGRESSMEN see further than the Government. Representative Governments usually lag behind public opinion, and the guardian and chief creator of opinion in India is still the Congress which Lord Willingdon decided to outlaw. So far as Indian government is concerned, the country has reached the stage where there is a bold transference of authority from Englishmen to Indians. The Government of India is to become virtually autonomous and independent of the British Parliament. It was a natural desire that authority, since it had to be transferred, should be exercised by the most conservative men whom India could produce. The Princes appeared to be the bulwark of conservatism in India. They would keep the Congress fire under control. Dependence upon their loyalty and support is no new feature in British policy. Lord Curzon, while curbing their powers, did his best to extol their office, and he gathered the Princes about him when he held the Coronation Durbar for King Edward the Seventh. We may smile now at his refusal to permit the singing of "Onward, Christian soldiers," but the incident shows how fundamentally British ideas of government in India have changed.

Sixty years separate the proclamation of Queen Victoria as the Empress of India from the inauguration of provincial autonomy, and less than twenty years separated this proclamation from the departure of Bahadur Shah, the last Moghul Emperor. Queen

## CORONATION DURBAR

Victoria knew very little about the Moghuls, and when she proposed that she should be made the Empress of India, Disraeli was embarrassed and Lytton the Viceroy was profuse with objections. The Prince of Wales had recently returned from a successful tour of India and from him Queen Victoria heard eagerly that India needed some symbol of her remote and august rule. Disraeli, in his own words, always flattered, and with Royalty he laid on the flattery with a trowel. He prepared the Royal Titles Act and it had a rough passage through the House of Commons and the House of Lords, where a Duke dared to complain that the Queen was less concerned with India than with the King of Prussia, who had recently made himself the German Emperor, or with the status of her own children when they travelled on the Continent. The Whigs died hard.

The Empress employed a *munshi* to teach her Hindustani. She gathered Indian servants about her. With a carpet in the Waterloo Chamber woven by Indian convicts and with the treasure of Tipu Sultan gathered in an alcove, Windsor Castle endeavoured to assume a new significance for India. Unfortunately Lord Lytton, who had proclaimed the new Empress from the walls of old Delhi, came to grief over Afghanistan, and Mr. Gladstone, when he appointed Lord Ripon to be Viceroy in his place, charged him with the special duty of reversing Lord Lytton's Afghan policy. Within a few years Lord Ripon himself came to grief. The period of Gladstonian Liberalism was short-lived, and though the older generation of Indian statesmen have been deeply concerned with Gladstonian Liberalism, Gladstone himself was little concerned with India. Indeed, the person most concerned with India was the Empress. She knew how a country was



## HIS HIGHNESS

governed. She knew that an administration needed the personal touch, and it shocked her that the so-called Anglo-Indians gave themselves airs and lived a life completely divorced from the Indian people. She wrote anxious letters to all her Viceroys, and when the appointment fell to George Curzon, she was frankly apprehensive. Her own death gave George Curzon the opportunity which he had wanted. The Indian servants quietly disappeared from Windsor Castle, but Lord Curzon prepared an elaborate Coronation Durbar to show how close were the links between the Princes and the people of India and himself as the Emperor's direct representative. The Princes would reveal their place in the hierarchy of India. Other notables were bidden to attend the Coronation Durbar, and many came protesting among themselves. For their protests the exalted Viceroy had no ear. There was deep satisfaction in Windsor and Calcutta. Before Lord Curzon left India a broken and discredited leader, he greeted the Prince and Princess of Wales. The Prince was seeing for himself the Empire over which he was soon to reign. He bore himself with becoming modesty. He insisted that, according to the conventions of Anglo-India, the Viceroy, as the Emperor's representative, should always precede him, and he laughed heartily when he saw a banner across a main street of Calcutta announcing: "God help the Prince."

When the Prince in his turn became the Emperor, he insisted upon attending his own Coronation Durbar. His decision was probably a wise one. The Princes went once more to Delhi and endeavoured, not altogether with success, to overcome their own ineradicable difficulties about precedence. The Emperor was more than courageous in his personal decisions. but he was

## CORONATION DURBAR

also the constitutional spokesman of his Ministers, and the Liberal colleagues of Mr. Asquith were not more receptive to Indian opinion than the Liberal colleagues of Mr. Gladstone. At the Durbar the Emperor George made the entirely unexpected announcement that henceforward his capital in India would be Delhi and not Calcutta. For nearly a century and a half the English had ruled from Calcutta. It was their own city; and it had been good enough for Lord Curzon. So long as the Government of India retained its seat in Calcutta, it knew what was in the minds of the English traders, and it was as traders that the English began their adventures in India. From Calcutta the Government of India could afford its annual excursion to the Simla hills, since it was never for long out of touch with English or Indian opinion. But Moghul Delhi, city of decorative ghosts, was scarcely more in contact with the life of modern India than the Simla hills. There is a traditional belief that whoever builds a new capital city of Delhi loses India. At the moment that the Emperor George was made to announce the transference of the administrative capital, he showed that the Government was relaxing its hold upon the imagination of the people. It was then that the process of losing India may be said to have begun. When Indian troops plunged into the Mesopotamian campaign Bombay and Calcutta knew long before Delhi and Simla that there was grievous mismanagement. The aloofness of Delhi was no less olympian than Simla's.

As though to spite the traditional belief, Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy, prepared the foundations for the city of New Delhi. Those foundations were laid in marshy land and disappeared. Another site had to be found. If there had been any enthusiasm for New

## HIS HIGHNESS

Delhi before the War, there was none after the proclamation of the Peace. The growth of representative institutions, inherent in the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, emphasized the fact that the vast expenditure which the building of New Delhi required had been extracted from an insufficiently represented Indian taxpayer. The apostolic simplicity of Mr. Gandhi and the members of his *ashram* challenged the formidable notion that Indians demand public ostentation. The inauguration of the new capital was thus a very quiet event. Not by the Parliament Act alone had Mr. Asquith and his colleagues damaged the prestige of the Throne.

The Emperor George shared some of his grandmother's concern for the people of India, and he sent his eldest son to India and Burma during the Viceroyalty of Lord Reading. Indians were discussing chiefly the prospects of a *satyagraha* movement, and Mr. Gandhi was at the height of his fame and influence. There were—to Mr. Gandhi's disgust—some ugly riots when the Prince of Wales landed in Bombay, and the efforts to boycott his visit were not without some success. The natural remoteness between England and India could not be overcome, even by the heir to the Throne, and the visit of the Prince of Wales to India no more prevented a clash between the two countries than the continental excursions of King Edward the Seventh prevented the Great War. There are limits to the usefulness of a monarchy. That the Emperor gained not a little personal respect in India was amply proved on the day of his funeral when Hindus, Mohammadans and Parsis assembled for their prayers on the Bombay *maidan*, and the city, for the first time in its chequered history, observed a complete *hartal*.

## CORONATION DURBAR

Encouraged by these manifestations of grief for the dead Emperor, many officials believed that the new Emperor should follow his father's example and attend his own Coronation Durbar. This the Emperor Edward had agreed to do, and it was a common assumption that he would fly from London to Delhi and that ancient India would see a modern Emperor descending from the sky. It was not proposed that he should make an extensive tour of his dominions, and by restricting his visit to the Delhi ceremonies the Emperor would have spared the Indian taxpayer some unnecessary expenditure. There is little doubt that the Emperor Edward's visit would have been welcomed. India saw enough of him to realize that he was free from hypocrisy and cant and that he could meet men and women, even of a distinctive colouring, on their own level. Then came the difference with the Ministers who could not countenance a marriage between a King and an American lady who had been already married. From the first, it was stated that India would regard such a marriage with deep disfavour. For this there is no very strong evidence. Indians have no prejudice against American ladies. Otherwise it would have been intolerable to appoint George Curzon, married to Mary Leiter, to be the Viceroy of India. Intelligent Indians are in fact sufficiently apprehensive of the conflict in the Pacific to realize that without the active friendship of the United States Great Britain cannot hope to keep her Eastern Empire. Their attitude to divorce is necessarily different from that of the English or their culturally backward cousins in the British Dominions, and they may have wondered why the laws which permit re-marriage to the King's subjects should not also be available to the King.

A more serious objection is that while Mr. Baldwin

## HIS HIGHNESS

believed that he reflected the opinion of all the Dominions—the Irish Free State being conveniently ignored—he could not pretend to reflect the opinion of India. Great Britain and the Dominions alone were to decide whether the Emperor of India should or should not abdicate. That decision the Government of India was constitutionally bound to accept. The inferior status of the Indian Empire was revealed to all the nations of the world. Indians, who have an unfailing capacity for judging men by what they are rather than by what they do, probably feel no shame for a former Emperor whose frankness and straightforwardness cost him his Throne. No puritanical frenzy drove Indians to destroy the Taj Mahal. But governing India from a city six thousand miles from her shores must necessarily involve many errors in psychological discernment, and those who argued that the former King's marriage would have had disastrous consequences in his Indian Empire were undoubtedly persuaded by their own arguments. There might have been some unhappy scenes at the Coronation Durbar. It would not have done if the Faithful Ally refused to go to Delhi with the two hundred ladies of his *zenana*.

Lord Linlithgow has already stated that it is the destiny of the Viceroyalty to approximate to the Governorship-General of a British Dominion. The Indian Viceroyalty, which knew George Curzon, may go the way of the Irish Viceroyalty, which knew Wentworth. Englishmen will hear without alarm that the King has appointed a certain Maharajah to be his Viceroy. The Federal Government may submit the name of a future Viceroy. The Order of Princes may submit the name, or the office may become hereditary, and the Nizam who succeeds in reviving

## CORONATION DURBAR

the Caliphate may consent to be the hereditary Viceroy of the British Emperor, even as his ancestor was once the Viceroy of the Moghul Emperor. By that time, however, the office of the Viceroyalty will have lost its present influence and prestige. The constitution of Federal India will have undergone some profound changes, just as the constitution of the Irish Free State has undergone profound changes; and the British Parliament will be powerless to prevent them. Change depends less upon the Viceroy and the Princes than upon the people of British India and their leaders. The will of the people has an odd way of prevailing. *Sanads* and treaties and safeguards yield to the pressure of opinion and the irresistible force of economic circumstance. "Put not your trust in Princes": it is a familiar and well-tried dictum. But who is certain that the leaders of British India are more enlightened or more courageous? Who, indeed, are they?



## GOVERNING CLASS





## CHAPTER XII

### MECCA AND NEWMARKET

THE wide hall of the Palais Electoral in Geneva was more than half empty. The casual observer could detect no lady of fashion, no wife of an Ambassador or Foreign Minister, sitting in the long diplomatic balconies. The journalists were sipping cognacs in a neighbouring café once favoured by Lenin. There was no temptation to plunge into the clear waters of the lake, for the *Bise* had begun to rock the lake-craft. There was snow on the Grand Salève. Yet of all the delegations of more than fifty nations the British seemed to be almost alone in making a brave show. Mr. Anthony Eden, Lord Halifax, Mr. Malcolm MacDonald dutifully spent a portion of the afternoon at the Palais Electoral, for it was the turn of the Indian delegation to express their views upon the occurrences of one of the more critical years of European history, and their spokesman happened to be the Aga Khan. His speech may, or may not, have attracted some attention from the Indian Press. It attracted none from the Press in Geneva or Paris.

Geneva and Paris, in fact, had other things to consider. There were interminable arguments about the very recent devaluation of the franc in Paris and Berne. There was the Ethiopian Minister in London, who contrived—on the specific understanding that he would take no part in the discussions—to retain his seat in the Assembly. There were Signor Mussolini and Herr Hitler playing their invisible parts in the corridors of

## GOVERNING CLASS

Geneva hotels. There was Señor Alvarez del Vayo, warning the Assembly in his guttural French that the civil war in his own country was in imminent danger of becoming an international struggle. There were the ceaseless activities of bland Monsieur Litvinoff, who, heeding the Nuremberg speeches, determined that if Germany fought at all, she should fight on three fronts and not on one. The League Council and the League Assembly themselves stood in peril of dissolution, leaving the recently completed Palais des Nations with no better fate than to become a war museum or a lunatic asylum. How was it possible for the non-British delegations, the ladies of fashion, the wives of Ambassadors and Foreign Ministers, the journalistic babel, to spare time for the Aga Khan or his bravely delivered speech?

Indifference and neglect do not normally attend upon the Aga Khan. He is rich. He is a first-class Prince. He has won the Derby. He has, perhaps, other remarkable qualities, for his grandfather, Mohammad Hasan, about whom few contemporary Englishmen appear to have heard, was himself a remarkable man. Mohammad Hasan was the hereditary Imam of the Ismailians and traced his descent from the Prophet through Fatima and Jaffa Sadik. The Ismailians are an individualistic community of Shiah Mohammadans. They are scattered throughout the Mohammadan world, from Morocco to Malaya, though they appear to be concentrated chiefly in Iran and India. They have managed to explain away the Prophet's strictures against usury. They are a trading community and make good bankers. They pay tribute to their hereditary Imam and so respect his authority that among the less intelligent of his followers he is held to be almost a sacred person, ruling men by the dreaded

## MECCA AND NEWMARKET

power of excommunication. Sacredness and worldliness were blended in Mohammad Hasan, who looked upon Iran as his mother-country. He married a daughter of the Shah and became the Governor of Mehelate. The Shah conferred upon him the title of the Aga Khan. When the Shah died, the Governor of Mehelate attempted to gain the throne of Iran. His efforts failed and he fled the country. Like the Parsis, themselves of Iranian descent, he found a permanent asylum in Bombay, where he was at once surrounded by Mohammadan merchants, known as Kojas. He took up his residence in Mazagaon, now an overcrowded district of Bombay, where the curious may still seek the garden through which Eliza Draper—the Stella of Laurence Sterne—escaped from a misunderstanding and unfortunate husband. The pretender to the throne of Iran moved in great splendour. He attended the races in semi-state and he helped his co-religionists to become the serious commercial rivals of the Parsis. He retained for himself and his heirs the title of the Aga Khan, but he avoided the mistake of living in Moghul Delhi. His neighbours were a commercial aristocracy untroubled by the proud disdain of the Rajputs or the Moghul nobility of Hyderabad. He died in 1885. His son outlived him by a few months, and a grandson, Mohammad Hasan Shah, became the Aga Khan at the age of eight.

The Aga Khan grew up to be bright, intelligent and well-read. He married his cousin Shahzada and arranged that there should be elaborate ceremonies in Poona: there no longer lived a Peshwa of Poona to object to rival ostentations. The Aga Khan regarded India, and not Iran, as his mother-country, and his wealth and unusual status, together with his undoubted ability, helped to make him a spokesman of Moham-

## GOVERNING CLASS

madan India. But the Imam of the Ismailians, who has followers in at least three Continents, could not be exclusively an Indian. He has, in fact, indicated his cosmopolitan character by his marriages, for he divorced Shahzada and married first an Italian lady and then a French lady from Aix-les-Bains. He came to Europe. The Empress of India and her grandson in Potsdam made him their guest. The Aga Khan played an increasingly important part in the social activities of the Edwardians: he knows all that there is to be known about horse-flesh. He became an expert at tennis, golf and boxing. But he did not reside permanently in England. Mohammadan India needed a leader. The Ismailians expected to see the Imam to whom they paid their tribute. Semi-divinity has its duties. It may be that semi-divinity still has its ambitions, for, even before the war, it was uncertain that the Caliphate would endure.

The Aga Khan soon saw that intellectually the Mohammadans of India were no match for the Hindus and that they were unlikely to hold their own unless they could improve their standards of education. He became, therefore, a leading patron of the Mohammadan University of Aligarh. Negotiations between Lord Minto and John Morley showed that authority considered important developments in the Legislative Councils. Unless there were special electorates, these Councils were likely to be swamped with Hindus. The Aga Khan at once led an agitation. There must be separate seats for the Mohammadans. The Government of India fully sympathized with his agitation, and there is some truth in the statement that the Morley-Minto reforms were the parent of political communalism in India. It was not, however, the Aga Khan's conscious intention to foster enmity between Moham-

## MECCA AND NEWMARKET

madan and Hindu. He understood even the need for unity, but before there could be unity between Mohammadan and Hindu there must be unity between Mohammadan and Mohammadan. The quarrels between Sunni and Shiah must be healed. Moham-madans in India must be united and strong. Was he wrong in thinking that the spiritual centre of Islam would shift from the Ottoman Empire to India? The Nizam may have entertained the same thoughts before the war. He was certainly entertaining them when he married the heir of Hyderabad to the daughter of the last Caliph, and Hyderabad seems to be eclipsing Aligarh as the centre of Mohammadan culture in India. But the Nizam kept to his own Dominions. A great figure was needed in British India. None recognized this need more clearly than the British Government when it found itself at war with Turkey, and without a doubt its man was the Aga Khan. He threw himself whole-heartedly into the Allied cause. He offered to serve as a private soldier, and the British Government, anxious that his importance should not be overlooked, made him a first-class Prince and gave him a salute of eleven guns-- a distinction which might encourage him to side with those Indian Princes who believe that a potentate with eleven guns should take precedence over a provincial Governor and put the Emperor to the trouble of turning out the Guard whenever he arrives at Buckingham Palace.

The British Government was fully appreciative of the Aga Khan's own efforts. He was good at making patriotic speeches and circumventing the propaganda of the Turks and the Germans. He knew how to compare English rule in India with Turkish rule under Sultan Abdul Hamid. English rule gave Moham-madans, he said, "the advantage of living under a

## GOVERNING CLASS

government which administers justice evenly between rich and poor and between persons of different breed and class; and we enjoy complete freedom to devise plans for the amelioration of our people." There is no doubt that without the Aga Khan's assistance, without the powerful combination of great wealth and semi-divinity, the English would have found the Mesopotamian campaign even more vexatious than it proved to be. The first-class potentate with a salute of eleven guns was invited as a matter of course to be a representative at the Peace Conference.

It was not possible, however, for the Imam of the Ismailians to fulfil his duties in the Mohammadan world without realizing the deep resentment which the Allied treatment of the Caliph was to provoke. If he was never completely identified with the Khilafatist movement in India, he saw the problem as a sincere Mohammadan and he spoke as a sincere Mohammadan. For a time his popularity was under a cloud. English supporters noted that he was not, after all, completely anglicized. Mohammadan supporters argued that he was too anglicized effectively to lead the opposition. The Khilafatist movement was Eastwards. With a potentate who led a Western life it had but little sympathy. Yet the Aga Khan had not been alone in believing that an Oriental could be at home in the West. The Maharajah Gaekwar of Baroda is at home in England. Dr. Rabindranath Tagore seeks a fusion between the cultures of the East and the West. More than a century ago Ram Moham Roy gloried in the freedom which the spirit of England was to give to India.

At home in the West, a spiritual leader in the East, the Aga Khan convinced himself that he had bridged the gulf between two worlds. He was a link between England and India. "All my life," he has said, "I

## MECCA AND NEWMARKET

have been a convinced and serious believer in the importance not only to Great Britain and to India, but also to mankind and to civilization at large, of strengthening the links which unite India to the British Empire. I believe in the development and growth of India into a vast, self-governing and free Asiatic Dominion, attached to Great Britain and the other Dominions by the ties of a common sovereignty and flag, and by a community of political, economic and intellectual interests."

He believes that India and Great Britain will always march together. It is the view which Englishmen are fond of expressing when they make optional after-dinner speeches in the company of a Governor and his aides-de-camp. Englishmen, in fact, find that their views correspond closely with the Aga Khan's. They read his stimulating book, *'India in Transition'*, and they realize that his accents are unmistakably English. And because there is this close correspondence between the views of Englishmen and the Aga Khan, Englishmen are naturally tempted to believe that the suave, cultured, sweetly reasonable voice of the Aga Khan is the voice of India. As the voice of India it is proclaimed to the world. Thus the Aga Khan attends one international conference after another. He is at Versailles, Lausanne, Geneva. He is a delegate at the Disarmament Conference, and when the list of delegates to the fateful Round Table Conference is published, the name of the Aga Khan appears as the leader of the British India Delegation.

It proved to be only a titular distinction, for the discussions centred upon Federation, and among the British India delegates the chief architect of Federation happened to be Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. It was Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru who declared at the Imperial Conference in 1923: "I can say with pride that it is



## GOVERNING CLASS

my country that makes the Empire imperial." He meant that an Empire which included the three hundred and fifty million Indian people was a far greater Empire than an Empire restricted to Great Britain and the Anglo-Saxon Dominions. He meant that the leadership of the Empire may one day shift from London to Delhi. No such thought has ever entered the mind of the Aga Khan. He knows only too well how deep the cleavage between British and Indian opinion can be. None the less Great Britain and India march side by side. Just as Whitehall has governed India for many decades, just as the British Parliament has claimed to be the guardian of India's political destinies, so the Aga Khan believes that by his lively contacts with the governing classes in England, he is doing invaluable work for the country of his birth and adoption. He is by no means the only Indian who has committed that mistake. The Indian peasant may be as incoherent as the farm labourer of Dorset, but the farm labourer of Dorset has made history, and educated opinion in India is no less tangible than educated opinion in England. Effective leadership is responsive to opinion, and while the Aga Khan has cultivated his friends in London and Paris, he suffers, like the administrators in Simla, the officials in Whitehall, the members of Parliament who profess to make the fortunes of India their special concern: he is out of touch. He has allied himself with a régime which was in any event doomed to disappear. Work for India must be done within India. There are race meetings in Calcutta and Bombay.

Perhaps the knowledge that he is out of touch with modern India led the Aga Khan to make the recent request that he should become a ruling Prince. The Imam of the Ismailians wanted his temporal power.

## MECCA AND NEWMARKET

He wanted to join the Order of ruling Princes, to which he does not belong. The British made him a first-class Prince and gave him a salute of eleven guns. All things considered, he obtained from the Great War rather more than the Faithful Ally. But the grandson of the Governor of Mehelate who sought in vain to displace the Durrani dynasty—subsequently destroyed by a former trooper in a Cossack regiment—needed a further token of British, and Indian gratitude. It was not forthcoming. There are limits even to the claims of paramountcy. If the people of Berar could not be denied the doubtful advantage of British India administration, no inhabitants of any district in the Presidency of Bombay or elsewhere could be forced to become the subjects of the Aga Khan. There would have been protests within the Order of Princes, whose history did not begin with the Great War. Moreover, the British had only to confer ruling status upon the Aga Khan, and the *zamindars* of Bengal—those Highnesses, titular Princes but not rulers, who exist because eighteenth-century Englishmen assumed that unless they created a special class of landlord agriculture could not flourish—would demand that their tenants forthwith became their subjects. Granting a potentate his salute of eleven guns is an innocuous process: to grant him subjects is to defy the cherished principle of representation. There is something to be said for restricting the number of ruling Princes in India. There is nothing whatever to be said for increasing them.

So the Imam of the Ismailians went without his temporal power. He accepted his defeat. There were other activities. There was the Derby. There was the Navy League, to which he became attached. There were the spectacular Conferences and, in September, 1936, there was the Seventeenth Assembly of the

## GOVERNING CLASS

League of Nations. When Edwin Montagu secured the admission of India as a founder member of the League of Nations, he believed that he had brought India very near to the status of an independent nation. It is difficult to believe that India, under the present Constitution, has any claim to be a member of the League of Nations. But for the cynical indifference of Monsieur Clemenceau it is doubtful whether this claim would have been admitted. To this day it is uncertain whether it is British India or the Indian Empire who is a member of the League of Nations. If British India is a member, can Federal India succeed to her membership? What happens to the membership of Burma? No one—in Delhi, or London, or even in Geneva—has troubled to discover. India complains that her membership is both expensive and useless. Time and again there have been debates in the Legislative Assembly, wherein Congress members have urged India's withdrawal from the League.

Suddenly Indian opinion recovered from its absorption in the affairs of India. It heard that Signor Mussolini intended to order an invasion of Ethiopia. Memories were roused. There was the memory of Napier's campaign, for which the unrepresented Indian taxpayer was forced to pay. There was the shining memory of Adowa, when the Ethiopian inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Italian and the Indian learned for the first time that Western arms were not invincible. There was the more recent memory of the Duke of Gloucester's visit to Addis Ababa for the coronation of Ras Taffari: the royalty of Europe and Africa met on equal terms. And now Signor Mussolini proposed to flout the hardly won principle of equality between the coloured and the uncoloured races. He proposed to create the dreaded *imperium* in which subject races

## MECCA AND NEWMARKET

serve a ruling race. He proposed to do in the twentieth century what Englishmen had done in the nineteenth century. He proposed, in fact, to govern Ethiopia as the English had once governed India. The issues involved were issues which Indians completely understood. Great Britain took a lead at Geneva, and India applauded. She applied economic sanctions, and India approved. She could have applied military sanctions, she could have gone to war against Italy, and Indians would have cast aside the yoke of passive resistance. Great Britain did not apply military sanctions: she did not go to war. She chose to blunder her way to Italian friendship. India has not forgotten. She watched the creation of the Empire of Italian East Africa, the proclamation of an European Emperor of Ethiopia, the appointment of an Italian Viceroy: Signor Mussolini had not misread her own history under British rule. She studied the magnificent schemes for developing the roads and communications of Ethiopia, for imposing health and education, for securing cultural and religious freedom. Those schemes had for India a familiar sound. She heard of the tribal chiefs who journeyed to Rome, where they made their submissions to the Emperor and the Emperor-maker and publicly praised all that the Emperor-maker was doing. And again she was not surprised. India does not lack "yes-men."

At the Seventeenth Assembly of the League of Nations India should have had very much to say — about the Italian conquest of Ethiopia and the Japanese penetration into China. A nation of three hundred and fifty million people should be strong enough to demand a new world order. It was the most critical Assembly which the League has yet encountered. It was desirable, therefore, that India should devote

## GOVERNING CLASS

particular care to the choice of her representatives. No doubt a Federal India would have been conscientious. But India was governed according to the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. Hers was still a Whitehall administration, and a Whitehall administration would not permit a Gandhi or a Nehru to speak from the forum once occupied by the Emperor Haile Selassie. It sent to the critical Assembly a former English official, the Dewan to the Favourite Son and the Aga Khan. Is it to be wondered, therefore, that on a dreary afternoon, when the *Bise* was blowing across the Lake of Geneva, the non-British delegations, the ladies of fashion, the wives of Ambassadors and Foreign Ministers, the journalistic babel could spare no time for the Aga Khan or his bravely delivered speech? They knew that the voice of India was none other than the voice of Whitehall.

Critics of the Aga Khan argue that he sympathizes too closely with British policy ever to regain effective leadership in India. The world to which he is attached is passing away. He is defeated. But he does not know that he is defeated, and ignorance is power. Because Arthur Wellesley did not know that he was defeated he outwitted Napoleon and won the battle of Waterloo. The Aga Khan has the authority to excommunicate. He is rich. He is intelligent. He can be outspoken. His usefulness to the Mohammadans of India is not exhausted.

It is an odd position for one whose grandfather might have been the Shah of Persia, and it is possible that Persia under the Aga Khan would be scarcely different from Iran under Riza Shah. The Shah, perhaps, would have been greater than the Imam, and it is natural to ask whether the Imam of the Ismailians should have become a leader of Mohammadan India

## MECCA AND NEWMARKET

at all. In what sense is he more of an Indian than a deposed Sultan of Turkey? But when Englishmen ask these questions they forget their own relations with India are anomalous. The Aga Khan who was born in India and has found himself a spokesman of India has a greater stake in the country than the English administrator whose career in India does not always last for more than a quarter of a century. Between the Aga Khan and Mohammanadan India there are ties of birth, religion, loyalty and sympathy. His brave little speech at the Geneva Assembly was more acceptable than would have been a speech from Sir Denys Bray, another delegate for India. Sir Denys Bray impressed other delegates by his ability and his grasp of international affairs. He would have made an excellent adviser to the British d  legation, if the British delegation had cared to listen to advice beyond the confines of the Foreign Office. By no stretch of the imagination could Sir Denys Bray be made to appear as a leader supported by powerful or representative opinion in India. He was an official temporarily converted into a national spokesman.

The Aga Khan may have his reasons for assimilating the life and culture of Europe. He is a Mohammanadan who may want European supporters. The growth of nationalism in India means Hindu ascendancy, and though the argument that a Mohammanadan should vote, speak and think as an Indian patriot is unanswerable, the Mohammanadans were once the conquerors. Fear of the conquerors is deep-seated, and with the fear goes suspicion, resentment and a vagrant hatred. There is, moreover, a rough geographical division between the Mohammanadan North and the Hindu South—a division interrupted by Hindu Kashmir, Mohammanadan Hyderabad, the Sikh regions of the

## GOVERNING CLASS

Punjab and the Mohammadan enclaves of Bengal. The Hindu South has profited from the lessons of the Irish Free State. There is no reason why the Mohammadan North should not profit from the lessons of Northern Ireland. The Federal structure appears to be immune to the perils of partition. Yet the network of safeguards, of checks and balances, may hide some clause which threatens to destroy the unity of the country, like an unnecessary girder which has upset the nicely calculated stresses of an airship and breaks her back when she encounters an upward and unexpected current of air.

The Mohammadans shall not be leaderless. What they have they must hold. The Imam of the Ismailians must keep on the right side of London society. He is scarcely less powerful in a London drawing-room than he is when he greets his followers on the barren coast of Zanzibar. He discusses horse-flesh and supports the Navy League. It was not, after all, the Aga Khan who made the winning of the Derby the passport to social distinction. And although nationalist India seems to have defeated him, the Aga Khan may yet win the last decisive battle. It is not improbable that even Federal India will choose him to be her chief delegate at Geneva: a Government which represents the Princes, the artificially created landlords and the minorities, cannot avoid the conservative strain.

## CHAPTER XIII

### ARCHITECT-IN-CHIEF

IN the late autumn of 1930 Mr. Ramsay MacDonald gave a dinner-party and invited some of the leading delegates of the Round Table Conference as well as Sir John Simon, whose long awaited and carefully written report on India had recently fallen dead from the press. At the dinner-table Sir John Simon sat next to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. It should have been a lively encounter, for both Sir John Simon and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru had experienced political frustration. Some sixteen years had passed since Sir John Simon ceased to be the hope of the Liberal party. A debate on conscription led to his exile, and though his Yorkshire constituency remained faithful to him, his chances of a return to the Cabinet appeared to be diminishing with the years. His own chief went into exile in December, 1916. Balliol followed Wadham. In Downing Street lived a little man with no respect for the public schools, the Universities, the civil services, the governing classes, and with no obvious reverence for Buckingham Palace. The times were, indeed, out of joint. Nor did they improve substantially when Mr. Lloyd George gave place to Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Bonar Law in his turn speedily gave place to Mr. Baldwin. The last Liberal lies buried in Sutton Courtenay.

Sir John Simon believed in his own powers of statesmanship, and when Lord Birkenhead, then Secretary of State for India, agreed to appoint the Statutory



## GOVERNING CLASS

Commission a year or two before its appointment had become obligatory, it was natural that the chairmanship should go to his Wadham contemporary. With the appointment of Sir John Simon as the chairman, no one in England or in India could complain. He might have been Lord Chancellor, and was likely, therefore, to sift the conflicting evidence with rigid impartiality. He would be industrious, hard-working, sympathetic. He would try to make friends. There were politicians in Delhi and Simla who deserved a better fate than to oppose an immovable administration. There were barristers who earned incomes which Sir John Simon himself might not have rivalled. There was Motilal Nehru, whose caustic humour and princely generosity delighted his colleagues and friends. There was Tej Bahadur Sapru, whose legal gifts had earned the unqualified admiration of Lord Reading. It was a genuine disappointment to Sir John Simon to find Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru as well as Pandit Motilal Nehru leading the boycott movement against his own scrupulous and well-intentioned Statutory Commission.

Like Pandit Motilal Nehru and Sir K. N. Haksar, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru was a Kashmiri Brahman. Some of these Kashmiri Brahmans had left their home country in the eighteenth century and attached themselves to the Moghul court in Delhi. The grandfather of Jawaharlal Nehru was a member of the court until it perished amid the racial antipathies of the Indian Mutiny, when Englishmen as well as Mohammadans gave a full rein to their hatred and cruelty. Under the British *raj* the Kashmiri Brahmans found what occupations they could. They took service under various Princes, including their own Maharajah of Kashmir. They pleaded at the Bar. They entered the Indian Civil Service. Nearly eighty years after the Mutiny—

## ARCHITECT-IN-CHIEF

in which many of them suffered prolonged privations—they have made themselves once more a political and cultural aristocracy, and though Jawaharlal Nehru is their extremist member, they may be regarded as a community anxious to be the governing class of India once the English have packed up and left the country.

Their most statesmanlike member is undoubtedly Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. Outwardly, he is not courageous. He does not go to prison or wear *khaddar* or shout "Gandhi-ki-jai." His inspiration comes from the West, from his deep knowledge of the English Common Law and his intimacy with the writings of John Stuart Mill. His temperament is Asquithian, his mind Roman. With men as learned as himself, with men who combine an intellectual patriotism with a determination not to make fools of themselves, he is completely at his ease. He grasps the essential factors of a problem in a remarkably short period of time. He is a first-class barrister and can impress a court where he could never hope to impress a crowd. He does not like to be enmeshed in oriental subtleties, and he fails, perhaps, to recognize that his own subtlety is one of his chief distinctions. He has embraced the Liberal faith, and it was to be his mission to see the Liberal faith applied to the problem of government in India. John Stuart Mill proclaimed the political supremacy of Parliament. The right to confer Home Rule upon India was vested in Parliament. To Parliament, therefore, the Home Rulers must appeal. There must be no boycotts, no civil disobedience. The Government must govern. When the battle for Home Rule was won, Indians would govern Indians. They would govern as Indians, not as Hindus or as Mohammadans. There never was a Brahman less tainted with communal

feelings. But the Indians who governed Indians would not exclude the co-operation of Englishmen. The English made good administrators, and racial exclusion is no wiser than communal exclusion. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru recognizes only the aristocracy of brains. Occasional Englishmen can be admitted to this aristocracy of brains—if only in deference to John Stuart Mill—and it is possibly an accident that this aristocracy contains an unusual number of Kashmiri Brahmans.

With a simple battle-cry of Home Rule Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru was not content. The cry of Home Rule in Ireland had forced a new quarrel between the Protestant of the North and the Catholic of the South. The quarrels which Home Rule provoked in India were innumerable. The Morley-Minto reforms were to bequeath political communalism, and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's legal training had taught him that the remedy of unitary Home Rule could not be applied in a country where seven hundred Princes ruled as little monarchs, their autocratic rights vaguely protected by half-forgotten treaties and *sanads*. The only remedy would have been Federation. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru had studied the Federal Law of Germany, Australia, Canada and the United States. He saw its strength and weakness, and he pondered over its application to India where one Prince rules over a State as large as Fascist Italy and another is sovereign of a well. He needed to give his countrymen something more than the idea of Federation. He would give them a complete Federal scheme, and for several years, while his countrymen were denouncing the horror of Jalian-walabagh, while they were practising *satyagraha* and declining to defend themselves in a court of law, he was quietly completing his scheme. He saw the



SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU



## ARCHITECT-IN-CHIEF

weakness of his countrymen's position, for it was the weakness of the agitator. They wanted to drive out the English foreigners and to rule their own country in their own way. But what was their own way? What proposals would they make to the Princes? Would they destroy the States? Would they refuse to allow the minorities their frequently proclaimed rights? How would they defend their country on land and sea? Would they repudiate the debts and obligations of the British Government of India? What, in fact, did they mean by Dominion status?

For the demand for Home Rule soon became a demand for Dominion status. Nor did the agitation end with the demand for Dominion status, for Indian opinion was eventually divided between those who stood for Dominion status and those who stood for Independence. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru knew that the ideology of Independence was no more satisfactory than the ideology of Dominion status. He understood the objections to both ideologies. He understood, moreover, the objections of the English, who were still the governors of India. Whenever he came to London he moved among men who took part in the formidable and almost unseen governing of England. He knew the solidarity of their conventions, the sureness of their touch. Except when they were taken by surprise, they were invincible. The demand for Dominion status and Independence did not alarm them. Such demands merely produced difficulties with which they knew how to cope. *Divide et impera*: who need instruct the English?

And Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru had personal knowledge of their methods of government. The Law Member is an influential person, and to be the legal colleague to a former Lord Chief-Justice of England was a dis-

## GOVERNING CLASS

tion in which Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru could take an undisguised pride. He could, for instance, watch with enjoyment the discomfiture of the Faithful Ally when he challenged Lord Reading to give a fresh indication of paramountcy; for undoubtedly the sympathies of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru are with the British Provinces rather than with the States, and if there were to be a clash between them he would wish the Provinces to win. But although he took a lawyer's delight in the controversy between the Viceroy and the Nizam of Hyderabad, he saw how completely divorced was the Government of India from the opinion of the country. He who had become a chief ornament of the Government was powerless to change its character. He who believed in political evolution and would have nothing to do with political revolution realized at last the psychological futility of Whitehall administration. Not a single member was returned to Parliament because of his superior knowledge of Indian conditions. In the end, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru found—like Ripon the Viceroy—that Gladstonian Liberalism does not work in India. He discovered, for instance, the impossibility of creating a Liberal party in India. The so-called Liberals stood for Dominion status. Like him, they spoke with the tongue of John Stuart Mill. Unlike him, they refused to realize the peculiar conditions of India. They preferred a Liberal agitation to a Liberal programme. They were rich. They were well educated. They had English friends. They belonged, like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, to the upper class and, like him, they refused to accept the ethics of *khaddar* and *swadeshi*. Like him also, they had no followers. They were not a party. They argued among themselves. They lacked constructive ability. They were not free from the taint of

## ARCHITECT-IN-CHIEF

communalism, and eventually Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru quitted a party of leaders, who actually led no one except themselves. It was better, if one desired to pursue a constructive policy, to be free from men who demanded Dominion status without pretending to understand its implications.

This political detachment did not mean that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru was insensitive to the grievances and ambitions of his countrymen. His own association with the Government of India made him impatient with any delay in the new reforms. He saw that the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms could not be indefinitely prolonged, and though he subscribed to the doctrine of political evolution he knew that the initiative, the drive and the energy must come from India and not from a few sympathetic members of the House of Commons. That was why he hastened to join the Congressmen and his former Liberal colleagues in a boycott of the Simon Commission. The members of the Commission were drawn exclusively from the House of Lords and the House of Commons. India, therefore, was to look to Westminster for the initiative, the drive and the energy. The new reforms, in fact, would be an imposition and not an evolution. The members of the Commission would hear the demand for Independence and the demand for Dominion status. They would, of course, concede to neither demand, and Congressmen would remain dissatisfied and embittered. They would have found objections to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's scheme for Federation. They would have declared that the Princes were not yet prepared to federate. In any event, the terms of reference did not entitle the Statutory Commission to investigate and report on conditions in the States. From the moment of its appointment the Statutory Commission was doomed.



## GOVERNING CLASS

So Sir John Simon twice visited India without seeing Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.

But Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru was not idle. Lord Birkenhead, in a speech commending the Simon Commission to the House of Lords, challenged the various parties of India to meet and prepare an alternative constitution. He never expected his challenge to be taken up. He had reckoned without Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Pandit Motilal Nehru. The two men were colleagues and rivals at the Allahabad Bar. The Nehrus' association with the Moghul court intensified their patrician outlook. They gave style to their wealth and they desired a larger arena for their political genius. Motilal Nehru earned a magnificent income at the Allahabad Bar and he entertained like a prince. But India under the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms offered a restricted scope for his abilities. He was never expected to become a member of the Government. He could only oppose. No matter how brilliant his speeches, how convincing his arguments, or damaging his retorts, the administration remained undisturbed and its measures frequently unamended. A great Parliamentarian was forced to play at Parliamentary opposition, to fritter away his talents in petty obstructions, to be destructive when, like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, he preferred to initiate and construct. Men saw the leonine head, the imposing carriage, the charm and ingratiating manner, and realized that Motilal Nehru was a great figure. They forgot that he wanted to be not a great figure, but a great influence. He was not by nature a democrat or a lover of the simple life. Disappointment and bitterness drove him towards the Congress camp and made him in the end a Congress leader. There were already marked political differences between Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Motilal

## ARCHITECT-IN-CHIEF

Nehru when Lord Birkenhead's challenge brought them together. That they could agree fully in the drafting of the Nehru Report was improbable. Motilal Nehru could not depart from the Congress demands, and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru was concerned chiefly with sketching his proposals for Federation. The Nehru Report reflected both views. Whether the Congress which envisaged a unitary Government could unite with those who advocated Federation depended upon the Princes, who, despite their history and their grievances, were popularly described as inflexible supporters of the British *raj*. And because the Princes were considered to be safe, few in Whitehall, Delhi or Simla expressed any concern at the prospect of Federation. They overrated the loyalty of the Princes and underrated their discontent and impatience with the Political Department. They also overlooked—and, perhaps, never discerned—the sympathies between Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and energetic Princes like the Maharajah of Bikanir.

The day for which Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru had waited seemed to have arrived when Lord Irwin, returning from his significant visit to London, made his declaration about Dominion status and promised a Round Table Conference. Sir Tej himself accepted the invitation promptly and so did the various Liberal leaders and the leaders of the important minorities. There remained an uncertain Congress. Sir Tej hoped, and for long believed, that his friendship with Motilal Nehru would secure Congress support. He had no illusions about Congress or Mr. Gandhi. He was himself free from religious inhibitions. Mahatmas had no place in his scheme of life. Yet he knew that Mr. Gandhi was strong where he and the Liberals were weak. The Mahatma had a party. It was, in fact, more

## GOVERNING CLASS

than a party. It was a society, rooted upon the willing assent of townsman and peasant, enforcing its discipline and commanding the loyalty of some millions of Indians. At the apex of the society was Mr. Gandhi, whom peasants could follow even though they could not completely understand his creed. Mr. Gandhi might have but the haziest notions about the building of a new constitution, and here he was no worse than the Liberal leaders who demanded Dominion status and avoided the preparation of a new constitutional scheme. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and his friends had the brains. Mr. Gandhi had the nationalists. Brains and party needed to be brought together. The first efforts failed. Mr. Gandhi began his ceremonial march to Dandi and was soon in prison. Even in prison Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru pursued him, but he was compelled to go to London for the opening session of the Round Table Conference without the Mahatma or any other Congress leader.

And in London his statesmanship was soon put to the test. He had tried to persuade his former Liberal colleagues to drop their demands for Dominion status and to concentrate upon a demand for Federation, Responsibility at the Centre, Provincial Autonomy, Safeguards. They were, however, too wedded to former ideas to agree readily to his proposals. With Dominion status, they argued, they could fight the Congress. Without Dominion status they were lost. Yet with their demand for Dominion status they would have found themselves lost in London. Whitehall knew the pitfalls. So did Liberal delegates like Lord Reading. So did Conservative delegates like Sir Samuel Hoare. Only the unexpected proposal could weaken their resistance. There was something like dismay, therefore, when Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru,

## ARCHITECT-IN-CHIEF

addressing the Round Table Conference, developed his scheme for Federation, and when the Maharajah of Bikanir followed him and gave his approval. The alliance between the Princes and the Moderates was not expected. The lead had come from a new quarter. And Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru argued with such admirable lucidity and paid such warm tributes to his old chief, Lord Reading, that it was not long before the former Viceroy of India gave to the proposals his blessings. With his blessings went those of the Liberal party in Great Britain, and against an alliance between the Liberals and the Socialists the Conservatives could not successfully contend.

The arguments against Dominion status could not apply to a Federal Government responsible to a Federal Legislature. The Conservatives failed to improvise resistance to the unexpected attack. Sir Samuel Hoare decided to reserve judgment. He would wait until he had seen the completed picture. The structure he understood; but he wanted the details to be filled in. It was obvious that he and his Conservative colleagues would confine most of their attention to the safeguards. Give us responsibility at the centre, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru argued, and we will give you in exchange all the reasonable safeguards that may be necessary during a transitional period. He was too intelligent not to realize that the transitional period was itself a snare and that there are no safeguards which a determined administration cannot surmount. From the moment, however, that the Conservatives waited for the details to be filled in and agreed to confine their attention to the safeguards, they were lost. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru had won the great battle of his life. He is the architect-in-chief of the new reforms.

He could afford, therefore, to be confident and gay

## GOVERNING CLASS

during the first session of the Round Table Conference. He had broken down the Conservative resistance. He had ensured for India administrations, both in Delhi and the Provinces, which were responsible to the Legislatures. He had charged political life in India with a new meaning. Legal men offered him their congratulations. Lord Sankey, the Lord Chancellor, was generous in his praises, and Sir John Simon, as he sat next to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru at Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's dinner-party, uttered cordial and encouraging words. "Tell me, Sapru," he asked suddenly, "what would you have said if we had chanced to meet each other in India?"

"I would have said, 'Hullo, Sir John, and what are you doing in India?'"

## CHAPTER XIV

### ON THE DEFENSIVE

A GREAT battle is not an isolated event. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru was compelled to follow up his victory with some solid achievements. It was one thing to win fellow-delegates to Federation and another thing to win a country to Federation. Sir Tej returned to India where some thousands of Congressmen were imprisoned. But he returned knowing that he had in one country a sympathetic Cabinet and in another a sympathetic Viceroy. He was grateful to Lord Irwin for winning from Mr. Gandhi his consent to a federal form of government. All too soon other men occupied the seats of his friends. In India Lord Willingdon succeeded Lord Irwin and failed to agree that Mr. Gandhi was rather more than the leader of a large and recalcitrant party. In England, before the second session of the Round Table Conference began, Sir Samuel Hoare—the Conservative delegate who refused to accept a picture without the details—succeeded the mild-mannered Mr. Wedgwood Benn as the Secretary of State for India. There came a general election. The Conservatives were once more in power. Had the country not to consider its precarious finances and the acute depression in its trade, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald might have encountered greater difficulty in making the Indian policy of his Labour administration the Indian policy of the National Government.

After the second session ended, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru

## GOVERNING CLASS

found himself in the tiresome position of an architect who sees his design modified by the town improvements committee, the town clerk, the borough engineer and the sanitary inspector. The original design has virtually disappeared. For three long years the English took charge of the proposed reforms, holding one complicated inquest after another. The third session of the Round Table Conference was practically their own affair. The Joint Select Committee was an agony long drawn out. Peers and members of the House of Commons were invited to make their contributions. The assistance of the Archbishop of Canterbury was sought and given. Mr. Neville Chamberlain claimed that the Government had imposed all the safeguards it was possible for the wit of man to devise. A new constitution, though it calls for the most careful and exact thought, does not require multitudinous details, and only the participants themselves in the interminable discussions can have supposed that they were actually improving the original design. Even the participants might have expressed gratitude that their own ancestors left the British Constitution unwritten.

And yet, whatever vexations the architect-in-chief may have suffered, his work endures. A Federal Government, responsible to a Federal Legislature, ensures that momentous issues for India shall be decided in Delhi and not in London. The power and influence of the Secretary of State and the Viceroy will probably decrease, and though an abundance of safeguards may hamper the free working of an Indian Government, the Indian statesman's ideas about the wit of man probably differ from those of Mr. Neville Chamberlain. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has given India a constitution which the English did not completely

## ON THE DEFENSIVE

destroy. He might have sought a reward, and he would have made an admirable Chief-Justice of the Federal Court, which he helped to establish. That appointment has gone to an Englishman. Instead, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has become a member of the Privy Council—a distinction not necessarily accompanied by legal or even by political ability.

From his own countrymen he expects and will receive no gratitude. He dissociated himself from the leaders who have no followers. He has no followers himself. It is doubtful whether he will find a seat in the Federal Legislature. He is not the first Chief-Justice of the Federal Court. He is left with the prospect of making his large income at the Allahabad Bar, and the man who devised a constitution is naturally more concerned with the making of law than with the making of money. India, like England, is wasteful with her talents. Second-rate ability has the better time. The career of Motilal Nehru sinks into history. His speeches, his witticisms, his magnificence will soon be forgotten. He was not given the opportunity, which the Round Table Conference was to give to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, of stamping his personality upon new reforms. That one victorious battle within the mellowed walls of St. James's Palace was worth a hundred defeats. A sense of frustration is the common experience of men who have desired to lead a people towards some definite goal. Few have died in the hour of victory or have been happy in their death.

Federation is still to come. In the interval a Viceroy may ask for the support of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. There will be commissions and enquiries which need an expert chairman, and already Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru



## GOVERNING CLASS

has presided over an enquiry into the state of unemployment in India. And if he seeks relaxation from the politics of India he can come to London. Many are the clubs which would welcome him. There would be talks with Lord Sankey, Sir John Simon, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. He would know what was going on behind the scenes. And here the British have shown a sly wisdom. They know that an aristocratic Indian likes to feel at home in England. He likes to be on terms of social equality with the governing class in India, and to find oneself on the same terms with the governing class in England is to enjoy a privilege which the Indian, however patriotic, does not care to surrender. M. A. Ansari, leader of the Nationalist Mohammadans who were willing that separate electorates should be abolished, wore *khaddar* and suffered imprisonment; but when he came to London he assumed the style which he considered proper for a man who was once the house surgeon of a large London hospital. Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, when he came to London in the late autumn of 1935, did not altogether forget his old Harrovian tie. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has never accepted London with the whole-heartedness of the Aga Khan. He acknowledges that the individual Englishman can still be useful in India, though he wants Whitehall administration to disappear. He attends London functions, but always there is an impression that he does not care for them. He is happier when he discusses the secrets of government or participates in the table-talk of Lords of Appeal and fellow Privy Counsellors. His stamp is theirs. Life will be less entertaining for him when the political separation of India from Whitehall is accomplished.

And because he is thoroughly anglicized, he must

## ON THE DEFENSIVE

shoulder the resentment, of many thousands of his countrymen. He belongs to the generation which believed that Indians could succeed to the posts now held by Englishmen, and that when Indians held all the posts in the Indian Civil Service, the railways and the Public Works Department, Home Rule was more or less established. He himself saw the hollow nature of the demands for Home Rule, Dominion status and Independence. But always his approach was juridical and political. He never professed to interpret *swaraj* in terms of social regeneration. His intelligence admitted the strength of Mr. Gandhi's leadership of the Congress, while his intellect despised the ethics of *khaddar* and *swadeshi*. The early nationalists never saw the coming struggle for power. They supported the Congress since they wished to expel the English, who were both foreign administrators and foreign competitors in trade. They did not realize that the process of social regeneration would shake conventional notions about economics, industry and trade. They have found to their dismay that a thorough-going Socialist is now the President of the Congress. Capital is on the defensive. It must look for a leader. Will it find this leader in Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, a man without any industrial or commercial training; in a wealthy banker like Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas; in a cotton millowner like Sir H. P. Mody? The Liberals might unite once again for the defence of Capital, like their English progenitors. Or they might reach an understanding with the English business man. More than once he has advocated the creation of a party to which he and his Indian rival could belong—a party determined to promote trade, no matter who the future Governors of India may be. The English business man represents a hardy stock.

## GOVERNING CLASS

He began as an adventurous trader in Surat. He established an Empire. Tradition has made him wise. He comes from a highly organized industrial country, where a governing class has learned how to deal with the industrial striker, the unemployed, the disaffected publicist, the so-called working classes who do not use the political power which has been vested in them.

India, on the contrary, is not a highly organized industrial country. Her strength lies in the six or seven hundred thousand villages. The peasant could dominate the industrial worker, and the more the Congress gathers strength from the peasantry the more confidently will it dictate to the industrialist. What then are the industrialists to do? How can they learn to act with the shrewdness of the English governing class? They could reach an agreement with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru or—if he declined to enter the industrial arena—with another generation of Kashmiri Brahmans, for there seems to be no reason why the aristocrats of India should not learn, like the aristocrats of England, to co-operate with the traders and the bankers. Or perhaps aristocracy has in India a different significance. Perhaps—as the record of the Kashmiri Brahmans suggests—aristocracies do not die with the frequency that they die in Europe. The power of the priest is not invariably the power of money. What are these Liberals, these bankers and millowners and merchants who discuss their grievances in the Willingdon Sports Club, what are they to do? Will they lead the middle classes against Jawaharlal Nehru? For the first time in their political history, they would have followers. The little men who have struggled for their degrees, their government posts, and subordinate positions in the offices of large firms

## ON THE DEFENSIVE

are a timid crowd. They ask chiefly for security. They may shun Communism. But they fear opinion, and the active opinion of the country is likely always to be the opinion of the Congress. For the middle classes are in India a minority. Unlike the middle classes of England, they cannot identify themselves with the governing class.

And Mr. Nehru's ascendancy in the Congress suggests that the aristocracy of India will not follow the English example. English industrialists avoid the mistakes of Indian industrialists, but India can avoid England's mistake in the Industrial Revolution. Jawaharlal Nehru's colleagues can decide how far industrial development in India shall go. They may relate all industrial progress to the welfare of the peasant. Those colleagues may, or may not, be Socialists. They may, or may not, share Mr. Nehru's appreciation of the Soviet experiment. They will certainly agree with him that the industrialist should not be king. The failure of the Liberals to acquire leaders is at least an assurance that modern India will not countenance any industrial or economic *laissez-faire*. Thus the industrialist's quarrel with Jawaharlal Nehru is likely to end as a bitter feud with the Congress. Where will he find an ally? In the reactionary Prince who for long refrained from entering the Federation because he desired to have no association with British India? In the *zamindar*, the landlord who walks in terror of an agrarian revolution? In the Englishman whose goods the Indian rival has boycotted and whose business he has endeavoured to ruin? How can there be an understanding with the Englishman when every anglicized Indian courts the suspicion of his countrymen? Defensive Capital must distinguish its friends from its foes. It must close its

## GOVERNING CLASS

ranks. And there is little doubt that the Englishman whose goods were boycotted and whose business came near to ruin can inspire confidence. Smith *sahib* was once convinced that he knew how to run the country. It used to be his job.

## CHAPTER XV

### BACK TO THE TRADER

AT one end of the Bombay *maidan* stood some ten or fifteen thousand *khaddar*-clad men listening to a fiery speech in Gujarati. At the other end of the *maidan* sat a number of Englishmen drinking their tea and waiting with a little vocal impatience for the sun to go down, so that they might order their first *chota pegs*. The fiery speech in Gujarati did not concern them, for in that summer of 1930 more than half the urban population were listening to denunciations of the satanic Government, the arrogant and uncoloured intruders from the sea, the distant Western Power which saddled their country with an enormous external debt. It should have been easy for the speaker on the Bombay *maidan* so to provoke the wrath of his large audience that ten or fifteen thousand *khaddar*-clad men charged towards the English Club, broke down the rope-fence which alone separated the *maidan* from the lawn and destroyed the Englishmen before the police or the troops could come to their rescue. The Englishmen knew, however, that this was an incitement which the Gujarati speaker, despite his eloquent and passionate denunciations, would never have tried to make. Civil disobedience means passive resistance. The *khaddar*-clad men denounced; they did not attack. And although they assembled evening after evening on the *maidan*, where the language of their speakers became increasingly provocative, they drew no comment from the Englishmen who were fluttering the pages of *Punch*

## GOVERNING CLASS

and the *Tatler* as they waited for their *chota peg* time to begin.

The Englishmen were tired. They had endured the heat of the day. The boycott hit them hard. Trade was vanishing, and they worked with depleted staffs. Many of their friends with smaller businesses were already ruined and had gone home, while those who represented firms with head offices in London maintained an irritating correspondence with men who did not understand the implications of the boycott and who demanded from their representative energetic action where tact and patience might have won the difficult day. There might come a day when Indians grew weary of civil disobedience and the boycott of British goods. On that day the Gujarati speaker would mount the rostrum and find only a few casual listeners. According to the reports from the police, that day was soon to come. Meanwhile the boycott lost none of its rigours. The English scarcely knew who would be the next ruined member of their community, and the success of the boycott meant the success of *swaraj*. They had gone to India as traders, and it was only as traders that they could hope to remain. They were far from pleased.

And one evening, as the first round of drinks was about to be ordered, mounted sowars suddenly appeared on the *maidan*. The *khaddar*-clad men ran across the *maidan* in pitiable confusion. Within a few minutes the wide space was cleared of the large company, save for a few stragglers who remained not far from the lawn of the English Club and waited for the police to drive them away. There was a small *lathi* charge and heads were damaged. A few Englishmen sickened at the sight. They are not intentionally cruel, and they do not like a racial struggle to be confused with *Punch*,

## BACK TO THE TRADER

the *Tatler*, cups of tea and expectant *chota pegs*. They experienced, moreover, the uncomfortable feeling that history was being made round a club devoted to tennis, dancing, billiards, bridge and a very long bar. The good old days, so they sadly admitted, had come to an end. They did not know, perhaps, that another generation of Englishmen had stood on the Bombay *maidan* and watched mutinous sepoys being blown from the guns.

An Englishman is never anywhere but he wishes that he were elsewhere, and he cannot be in India without wishing that he were in England. Outwardly, he is happy, even in the oppressive humidity in Bombay. He arrives at Ballard Pier and at once his compatriots surround him. They take him out to lunch. They show him the swimming pool, the tennis courts, the cricket pitches, the long bar. They give him dinner at the Taj Mahal hotel and they take him down the "lines." Nor are the shows and sights of Bombay to be exhausted in a single day. There is the yachting from the spacious harbour. There are the yellow sands of Juhu; the spectacular race-meetings at Mahalaxmi; the long walks across the island of Salsette, where Englishmen in shorts tread down the undergrowth and appear to have forgotten what Aunt Mary said about the snakes; the progressive flying club; the Bombay Light Horse, the Hunt and the Jackal Club. There are the letters home in which the newcomer seeks to describe the long and curious meals, the shoeless servants who creep about the house, the luxurious taxis, the warmth which induces the midday sleep, the prickly heat. He shares accommodation with three or four other men because the house is large and the rent high. He is surprised, perhaps, that the invitation to join a *chummerie* comes from so many different men.



## GOVERNING CLASS

He has had no time to know the compatriots with whom he has agreed to live, and lack of intimacy has to be concealed by a racing cordiality. Englishmen greet each other with abundant cheerfulness and with unlimited supplies of liquor. They spare no pains when the newcomer falls ill, and illness is a frequent experience. The graveyards of Bombay tell the familiar tale that Englishmen are apt to die before the age of thirty.

The English are, in fact, good fellows, but they insist that the newcomer shall be a good fellow in his turn. The general manager of his firm will take him out and see that he joins the right clubs. He must sign the visitors' book at Government House and call on the wives of Judges and members of the Executive Council. He cannot do just what he wants to do. He is never left alone. He has only to take a walk along the dusty road and the driver of a passing car is certain to insist upon giving him a lift. Englishmen in India stand together. They have stood together for more than three hundred years.

Their history and their circumstances should have made them adventurous both in mind and body. The first Englishman ever to set foot in India was the Elizabethan, Thomas Stevens. He was also a member of the new and misunderstood Order of Jesus, and thus, according to the laws of Elizabeth, he was a traitor, for whom there awaited a traitor's death. The Englishmen who followed him had to contend against the traders of Portugal and the Netherlands, which meant a clash of arms, so that the English trader became the English soldier. A century later there was the conflict with the French, and that conflict involved us in war in the Carnatic and in Bengal. The traders had taken to the sword. Before they could return it to the

## BACK TO THE TRADER

scabbard, the English had conquered more than half the country and imposed the doctrine of paramountcy of the Crown upon their princely allies.

With the rise of British rule there came different standards of behaviour. Job Charnock, founder of Calcutta, lived a life which Edinburgh could never tolerate. Warren Hastings seduced and married the wife of a harmless German. The men who went out to India were no better than the men who went out to the colonies, and, in the year of Queen Victoria's accession, Sir George Cornwall Lewis complained bitterly that "the scum of England is poured into the Colonies: briefless barristers, broken-down merchants, ruined debauchees, the offal of every calling and profession are crammed into colonial places." William Jones and Thomas Babington Macaulay went out to India for the excellent reason that they were short of funds. Many Englishmen adopted the customs of the country with the slightest hesitation, and it is, perhaps, strange that the ladies who see that the conventions and proprieties are observed in contemporary Belgaum have never ordered the destruction of the *purdah* buildings attached to the attractive bungalows, in which lived hardy and homesick Englishmen in the earlier decades of the nineteenth century. But as the morals of the Regency gave place to the morals of a new governing class, so morals changed in India. Even the Clapham Sect—through the influence of Sir John Shore, an ineffectual Governor-General—helped to improve the ecclesiastical representation in India, and perhaps the improvement was needed. Englishmen gradually put away their concubines and assumed fidelity to their wives. Those wives were frequently dark in colour. Englishmen went out to India before the age of twenty. They did not return until they had

## GOVERNING CLASS

made their fortunes. They contracted marriages with women of the country, and their marriages, like their children, were accepted. More than once Queen Victoria signified her approval of a marriage between an English aristocrat and a member of some ruling family. Indian blood flows through several of the families who added lustre to their names in India. It flows through the British Peerage.

But the Teuton lurks within the Anglo-Saxon. He can be brutal when he is afraid. The caste-ridden country which he was conquering forced him to create his own caste. He was the white Brahman. His blood should not be contaminated. His plodding brain tried to evolve a doctrine of racial superiority. Then came the Indian Mutiny, and at once he removed the disguise from his antipathies. He fought, like his foes, with a cruelty aggravated by long smouldering hatreds. Terrorist pitched himself against terrorist: it was the massacres of English women and children which their countrymen have remembered. When the Crown assumed the functions of the East India Company and India was converted into a satrapy of Great Britain, the English community had to justify itself as the ruling caste. It chose the justification of race. But even the caste had to admit the distinctions of class. The administrator, summoned to assist the nabobs, became the representative of the Queen's Government. Henceforward the administrator was in a class apart from, and above, the trader. The Indian Civil Service was a coveted service which only a man of special ability could hope to join. It became in time the most distinctive of all the services. The training to which the candidate had to submit was arduous, and once he entered the service, his powers were apparently limitless. Yet he was not permitted to forget that the trader

## BACK TO THE TRADER

was also an European. Though he travelled the countryside with his merchandise, the trader was nevertheless a *sahib* and entitled to the honours and courtesies of a *sahib*. The word European has entered the Indian languages.

As the administrator is distinct from the trader, so the wholesale trader is distinct from the retail trader. There are few clubs in India which the wholesale trader may not share with the administrator, the army officer and the barrister. The retail trader, however, must have a club of his own. Sixty years ago the social distinctions between the man in commerce and the man in retail trade may have been easy to grasp. They may have had a rough-and-ready correspondence with distinctions in educational standards and manners, though there were individual hardships for the retail trader who shared the intellectual sympathies and enlightenment of the governing classes in the 'fifties and the 'sixties. Those distinctions have since disappeared, and the perpetuation of the social barrier in India has led to many absurd and sometimes unhappy situations. For European life is centred in the clubs, and exclusion from a club is the most effective form of social boycott which Anglo-India has succeeded in devising. The separation of the wholesale trader from the retail trader does not mean, in post-war India, the separation of the cultured from the uncouth. Brother does not meet brother if one is the agent for an insignificant whisky firm and the other is the manager of a store with an European reputation. A knighted wine merchant would soon come to grief if one of his assistants sold a bottle of whisky across the counter and omitted to call it "one twelfth of a dozen bottles of whisky." The legendary Punjabi peasant is not alone in supposing that Queen Victoria is still on the throne.

In the great Moghul-city of Ahmedabad there reside

## GOVERNING CLASS

less than one hundred English men and women. There are the Commissioner, the Collector, the Sessions Judge and the visiting Chaplain. There are the officers of an Indian regiment and the representatives of well-known and reputable firms. They live in the wooded and attractive cantonment outside a city which has more than three hundred thousand inhabitants. They meet in the Ahmedabad Club and a warm friendship unites them. They have acquired an extravagant social prestige, though less than a mile from their bungalows lies the Sabarmati *ashram*, from whose bare walls Mr. Gandhi used to direct and inform the Congress conscience. But the Commissioner, the Collector, the Sessions Judge, the visiting Chaplain, the Indian Army officers, the representatives of well-known firms and their wives number little more than fifty people. The other Englishmen are the managers of cotton mills and their assistants. They do not apply for membership of the club. They are outcaste. They are the Untouchables of the English community.

And Untouchability is rampant among Englishmen. There is an unhappy community known as the Domiciled Europeans: men and women whose parents or grandparents were English and whose stock is Anglo-Saxon. Sometimes they bear names which for centuries Englishmen have honoured. But they cannot claim to have received an upbringing and an education in England. Their boyhood, their girlhood and their adolescence were spent in India. They are said to be contaminated. They are actually paying the penalty for their parents' poverty. More than one mid-Victorian Englishman took his wife to India and produced so large a family that he had no savings. After his death neither his own family nor his wife's bore the expense of bringing home a widow with seven

## BACK TO THE TRADER

or eight children. It was cheaper to remit an allowance to India: or, perhaps, no allowances were ever remitted, and the widow, living upon the charity of her husband's friends, fought to maintain English standards of living in a country where the standards, whether better or worse than the English, are very different. Her children eventually married into families whose circumstances were similar to their own, and became in turn the parents of children without any direct association with the ancestral country.

These people, these Untouchables of the European community, are the colonists of India. There was a time when the colonists of Canada, the colonists of Australia and the colonists of New Zealand complained of the casual treatment which they received whenever they visited the Mother Country. The belief lingers that the English stock deteriorates when it is born and bred away from the mists and fogs of the British Isles: "black men begin at Calais." The advance to Dominion status has compelled Englishmen to redecorate their public utterances about the colonists and to welcome them with great ostentation at the proceedings of the Royal Empire Society. The colonists of India are forgotten. They are classed with the Anglo-Indian, or Eurasian, community, and Sir Henry Gidney officially leads both the Anglo-Indian and the Domiciled Europeans. It used to be fashionable to bestow pity upon the Anglo-Indians. They were the hostages of fortune. Their apologists have argued that Englishmen married Indians because they wanted a race, partly English, to fill the subsidiary posts of the administration. They wanted men whom they could trust, and, as it happens, the Anglo-Indians are still the backbone of the auxiliary fighting forces.

The actual facts of Anglo-Indian history are very

## GOVERNING CLASS

different. Englishmen marry, from passion, from convenience or from unfortunate necessity. They have never married because they wanted subsidiary posts to be filled or auxiliary forces to be manned. Marriages were contracted before the prejudice against colour and the creed of racial superiority had taken shape. The Anglo-Indians perpetuate an era before Englishwomen came in comparatively large numbers to reside in India, before they set the tone of English society and insisted that they should have no rivalry from the women of the country. The Anglo-Indians also perpetuate an era which the mid-Victorian preferred to forget; the era in which "the scum of England . . . briefless barristers, broken-down merchants, ruined debauchees, the offal of every calling and profession" were poured into India and the colonies. Yet their ancestors, so ignorant of the claims of racial superiority, did not overlook the attractiveness of their wives and concubines, and some of the contemporary Anglo-Indians are among the handsomest people in the world. There is no biological reason why they should not be among the fittest and the most intelligent. They are not by nature worse than the descendants of King William the Fourth.

Admittedly, the English have helped to provide the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled community with good schools. At the Barnes Schools, flung upon the Deccan heights of Deolali, the boys and girls have every chance of leading the healthy life, and their intelligence and physique compare favourably with those of boys and girls in the Mother Country. Englishmen watch them box and swim and play cricket. They approve, and yet their approval never becomes wholehearted; for the boys and girls are outcasts. Before their adolescence is well advanced, something happens

## BACK TO THE TRADER

to make them unworthy of the Englishman's fellowship. Something has to happen. For India contaminates. Without such a contamination the line between the Englishman and the Domiciled European could not with any honesty be drawn.

And, indeed, in adult life there is too often a marked deterioration. Its cause is neither physical nor functional; it is psychological. An adolescent cannot face his social degradation and escape psychological damage. People who are treated like inferiors tend to become inferior. The Englishman who may not enter his brother's club often behaves like a man with a grievance. He is either aggressively hearty or unduly sensitive. Those who do not display their grievance are superior men. But a psychological approach to the problems and grievances of the English community soon reveals the instability of the foundations upon which their social life rests. It is one thing to insist that there shall be no marriage or intercourse between English man and Indian woman. It is another to create a racially exclusive society within which the men so much outnumber the women that the arrival of an attractive spinster becomes an event of major importance. In such a society the standards are not always fastidious, and thus the "fishing fleet" of questing ladies frequently enters port at Bombay and Calcutta. Where women are in a minority, they acquire an individual authority which has strange consequences both for the men and for themselves. Flirtations are demanded, and a gregarious environment blunts the intimacy of married life. The men and women may be gay. They are seldom happy.

Until August, 1931—the month of the financial crisis—Englishmen could visit the authorized European brothels. But stories of the white slave traffic, the



## GOVERNING CLASS

agitation of missionaries, the approval of the Government led the Bombay Legislative Council to order their destruction. The brothels were a poor substitute for the more normal relations between men and women in London, and, except from curiosity, not a very large proportion of the English community may have visited them. That women play but a little part in the lives of Englishmen in a city like Bombay is evident from the furniture of their houses. Countless servants creep through unfurnished rooms. There are no signs of domestic comfort. The Englishmen are left to play and work and drink. They can keep their bodies fit, however prone they may be to tropical diseases. But their minds are not often at ease. Only a priest or a homosexual should anticipate a happy bachelorhood in India.

And only a philosopher should expect to experience in India a happy marriage. There comes a day when the Englishman's children leave for their schooling in the West and so escape from India's reputed contamination. With them goes their mother, who must have an establishment in England. So the husband makes the necessary sacrifice. He plays the bachelor and returns to a *chummerie* where gaiety, buoyancy and the lavish distribution of *chota pegs* mock the gnawing loneliness. The foreigner may wonder why so many English families can afford to send their sons to the more expensive schools. He has not seen the parent sitting on the bare verandah of a *chummerie* while he curses his servant, his *chota peg*, and the prickly heat, while he wonders whether his wife is living within her allowance, and while he silently debates whether he can stand the strain of exile until his youngest son has completed his course at Sandhurst. But for his courage and endurance more than one of the English public schools would now be closed.

## BACK TO THE TRADER

As he sat with a few of his compatriots at one end of the Bombay *maidan*, while some ten or fifteen thousand *khaddar*-clad men stood at the other end and listened to a fiery speech in Gujarati, the lonely English parent knew that a complacent attitude to the Nationalist movement could not be justified. The old ascendancy of the English had gone. It was undermined by the Government of India's claim to fiscal autonomy, and it was undermined by the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms which, however unfortunately they might work in Delhi and Simla, were working well in most of the Provinces. The Englishman was sharing political power with the Indian, and the outward ceremony with which he was greeted would disappear once the populace realized that the Englishman no longer insisted upon his racial superiority. Like the politicians whom he affected to despise, he refused to believe in the exalted wisdom of the Government of India. He had served in the Mesopotamian campaign, and he knew how ignorant of the essential needs of modern warfare the administrator had been. Bombay and Calcutta had known what was going on: Delhi and Simla did not know. The trader, in fact, was nearer the heart of the Nationalist movement than the administrator. He realized the implications of the boycott. There might be signs that the Indians were growing weary of the boycott. But no Indian could be compelled to buy British goods against his will, and the asceticism which Mr. Gandhi preached had necessarily an adverse effect upon the markets. Was it worth while to maintain a semi-British administration if the English were to lose their trade? The first Englishman to reach India was a Jesuit. The last Englishman to leave India may be a missionary or a trader. He is not likely to be an administrator.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE BRITISH DOMINATION

DALHOUSIE has said that the East India Company existed "to found British greatness on Indian happiness." It is not often that Englishmen develop a grammar of rulership in India, and here they differ from the Dutch and the French—their old adversaries in the East Indies—who are careful always to express the principles which govern the rule over their colonial possessions. The Dutch and the French are determined to establish a spiritual relationship between the people overseas and the people at home. Thorbecke wrote that "the interest of the native population is the interest of the Motherland." General van Heutsz declared that the Dutch colonial policy must be "backed up by strong and expert support and great interest not only on the part of a few prominent people, but of the whole nation," and Dr. H. Kraemer has argued that "the activities of everybody, of the official as well as the planter, of the industrialist and the trader, penetrate into the spiritual life of the natives. . . . Since all have a share in it, it is justified to rouse everyone's sense of responsibility. Every one of us, be he great or small, has a part to play in this immense drama of the contact between East and West." Not only is there a very severe training for the future administrators and missionaries from Holland, but the Colonial Institute in Amsterdam has special courses for future employees of the Java sugar industry, and here the young men acquire a knowledge of Malay and Javanese and study

## THE BRITISH DOMINATION

the history of Java. Unless he emerges from this course with success the candidate cannot hope for employment in the Dutch East Indies.

About the French ideas of colonial government, though they were changed after the advent of Napoleon and again in the last decade of the nineteenth century, there has never been any confusion. The principles which Gallieni and Lyautey followed in Indo-China have been constantly stated, and Monsieur André Maurois' life of Marshal Lyautey has shown English readers the principles of French government in Morocco. That tragic figure, Paul Doumer, endeavoured so to develop the machinery of government in Indo-China that the Governor-General should "govern everywhere and administer nowhere." Lest the people of Paris should forget their colonial possessions, there are numberless articles in the daily Press, and they maintain a standard of scholarship and authority which would narrow the journalistic market in London.

Very different conditions prevail in England. The average Englishman is frankly convinced that only a specialist can unravel the tangle of Indian politics. The art, the music, the thought of India are alien to the Englishman. In the eighteenth century London played with her *chinoiserie*. What London has taken from India are a number of Hindustani words, curry and the bungalow. There has been a fitful appreciation of India. When the English lost the American colonies they turned, like Pitt, to the brightest jewel that remained of the British Crown. The impeachment of Warren Hastings revealed a typical attitude—both enlightened and stupid—to the problem of Indian government. The elevation of Queen Victoria to be the Empress of India has primarily a domestic signi-

## GOVERNING CLASS

ficance. After sixty years the English have grown accustomed to the initials of *Rex et Imperator* and believe that their maintenance is not less important than the maintenance of Sandringham or Balmoral; but there may come a day when the Emperor of India is as much an anachronism as the Defender of the Faith. And although India is an Empire, she is not a Dominion whose freedom of action is safeguarded by the Statute of Westminster. India is given the pomp and ceremony: the Dominions are given the power. The Dominions are linked to the Mother Country by ties of blood, and when Lord Milner developed his contentious doctrine of British Race Patriotism, he made the alienation of race the excuse for India's permanent exclusion from the privilege of Dominion status. The Royal Empire Society takes a legitimate pride in its annual summer school, where the members attend lectures on various Imperial issues. In 1935 the organizers of the annual summer school omitted any lecture on India—for fear, perhaps, of provoking dissent—and in 1936 they agreed to a harmless little lecture on Warren Hastings. Yet they readily found room for a lecture on the Dutch administration in the East Indies.

Unlike the Dutch and the French, we have never attempted to identify the people of England with the people of India. "Indian history," the *Times* once candidly admitted, "has never been made interesting to English readers, except by rhetoric." It has been often asserted in India that the British *raj* exists for the economic advantage of no more than five thousand English families. Certainly, the so-called "Anglo-Indian" families form but a minute proportion of the English populace: they are not even a majority in Cheltenham. Fiscal autonomy and the economic

## THE BRITISH DOMINATION

geography of the Indian cotton industry have deprived Lancashire of her spoils. Within recent years South Africa has taken the place of India as the chief Imperial purchaser of British goods, and when naval or military considerations demand the commercial use of the Cape route the chances of improving British trade with India will be still further diminished. Of what advantage, therefore, is the British *raj* to the English people? As a training ground for British soldiers at the expense of the Indian taxpayer? Who paid for the Sikh guard at Addis Ababa—the British taxpayer or the Indian?

But if the English have avoided the formulation of a philosophy of rulership, if they have not attempted to identify the people in India with the people in England, their rule has not been haphazard or contemptuous. The English are poor philosophers, but they are artists in action. Few English administrators have spoken with the lucidity of Thorbecke or van Heutsz, Lyautey or Doumer, but it is by no means certain that the Javanese under the Dutch or the Arabs under the French have been more successfully administered than the Indians under the British. The Dutch and the French administrators have more knowledge, a sounder grasp of the languages, the art and the thought of the people under their control. The English administrator has a readier sympathy, a quieter manner in smoothing difficulties. He does not understand the art and the thought of the country. Dupleix and de Bussy had a contempt for his methods and his strategy. They themselves radiated intelligence, but it was the English who drove their compatriots from the country. The *Pax Britannica* is a real peace. A man can travel from one end of the country to the other without serious fear of assault. Yet the English representatives of the

## GOVERNING CLASS

*raj* are exceedingly few. There are in the whole country not more than thirteen hundred English civil servants and police officers. Usually some four hundred are on leave and four hundred are working at headquarters. An administrative district may have a million or more inhabitants in it, but it has seldom more than one or two English residents. In fact, the greater number of Indians spend their lives without once seeing an Englishman. The sixty thousand troops—most of whom are stationed on the North-West Front—are really a minute garrison, and there were times when, during the Great War, even this garrison was severely restricted. For this reason alone it is difficult to argue that the British rule by force. Bombing aeroplanes, tanks and the full equipment for modern warfare may give to the sixty thousand troops a strength and mobility which six hundred thousand troops might not have possessed before the Great War. Yet it is difficult to believe that India could not expel and destroy them once there was a national determination that they must go “bag and baggage.” One may dislike the methods by which the English annexed more than half the country, one may resent the cruelties of the Indian Mutiny, the soul-destroying conventions of Anglo-India, the racial exclusiveness; the British *raj* nevertheless remains a remarkable achievement. It was superb artistry, and artists in action—Warren Hastings, Arthur Wellesley, Charles Metcalfe, John Nicholson, John and Henry Lawrence, F. L. Brayne and Malcolm Hailey—have found in India their most fruitful field.

But when men sought to give the *raj* a philosophical justification they went sadly astray. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms put the representatives of the Government on the defensive in the Council of State

## THE BRITISH DOMINATION

and the Legislative Assembly. They were no match for the swarajists. They were driven from one defensive post to another. Sir Basil Blackett, as the Finance Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, obviously enjoyed the fray. He could lead an attack into the enemy's camp, and a reporter, moved to anger by the smarting sallies, hurled an attaché-case at Sir Basil's head. The dazed Minister exclaimed: *me truncus illapsus cerebro sustulerat, nisi Faunus ictum dextra levasset*. William Pitt would not have quoted more aptly from Horace. Sir Basil Blackett was but a temporary resident in Simla and Delhi. The members of the Indian Civil Service are not Parliamentarians.

No people, other than the English or the German, would have developed a theory of racial superiority which bore no relation to the facts of history or biology. The English explained with pathetic inadequacy their exclusion of the Anglo-Indians and the Domiciled Europeans. And even their use of the word, European, has defeated this purpose. For they interpret an European to be a man born and bred in any country north of Suez and west of Istanbul. It means an Englishman, a Scandinavian, an American, a Mexican and a Brazilian. So long as the white foreigners were few, the English did not resent their presence. They became members of the recognized clubs. They followed hounds and joined the Bombay or Calcutta Light Horse. But after the war, the uncoloured foreigners increased in numbers, and while the English were suffering from the boycott, Americans and Germans made the best use of their opportunity. Moreover, the Americans and Germans played havoc with the conventions of Anglo-India. They formed their own clubs, or else, they popularized the lounges of the leading hotels, so that young men and women of



## GOVERNING CLASS

various nationalities, occidental and oriental, met and danced and forgot the claims of seniority or the details of India's table of precedence.

There is said to be a deep affection between the Englishman and the Indian peasant. Without a doubt the Englishman succeeds in winning the respect, and even the love, of his servants, and the instinctive courtesy of the peasant ensures a warm welcome whenever he travels through the country. But his servants are themselves a special class, and the fact that most Indians have never yet seen an Englishman destroys the argument that there is a deep affection. Personal impressions can scarcely count. In the past century and a half the English have failed to deliver vast tracts of country from the injurious *zamindari* system. They have not loosened the stranglehold of the moneylender. They have not, in fact, added to the nation's wealth. The generation of Warren Hastings may not have realized that the plight of the Indian peasant was worse than the plight of the agricultural labourer in the West, and it was, perhaps, impossible that social and economic reform in India should keep pace with social and economic reform in the West. But those who are satisfied with the educational and social progress of India since the establishment of the Indian Universities in the middle of the nineteenth century do not know what has been accomplished in Russia since the Bolshevist revolution, in Italy since Signor Mussolini's march upon Rome, or even in Germany since the establishment of the Third Reich. Railways and roads—even strategic railways and roads—motor-cars, ambulances and hospitals did not require the presence of the English before they could be introduced to India.

The major economic problems of India are un-

## THE BRITISH DOMINATION

solved. The country grows progressively poorer. More than thirty million acres, it is true, are now under canal irrigation, and there are still other canal schemes and developments. Canal irrigation helps to relieve the pressure of population. That pressure, nevertheless, continues and there will come a time when further relief is impossible. The population of India and Burma has been increasing at the rate of three millions a year. Before the present century is half-way through its course the population of India and Burma will exceed four hundred millions. Before the end of the century it will exceed five hundred millions. Something must happen: a desperate war between Hindu and Mohammadan, veiling the struggle for existence; a plague or an influenza scourge which will claim its victims beyond the confines of India. The country is at the beginning of her trial, not at the end. The problems of the twentieth century are far more complex than were the problems of the nineteenth, and even those who allow that the alien rule of the nineteenth century was successful in India may be driven to realize that alien rule in the twentieth century has become impossible. It would not be too difficult to find suitable Indians for the posts now held by thirteen hundred English civil servants and police officers. For a long time the India Civil Service obtained no favour from the young English graduate, and in 1933 only seventeen Englishmen offered themselves for the examination. Lord Zetland has since made a drive through the Universities. He has instituted a method of selection which complements the older method of the competitive examination, and the number of candidates has risen, so that the prospect of an Indian Civil Service without an English membership is now removed; but whether the *personnel* of the

## GOVERNING CLASS

Indian Civil Service is partially English or exclusively Indian, the system which it is intended to perpetuate cannot be expected to endure. English statesmen no more abolished the problem of Indian reform when they accepted the Government of India Bill than they destroyed the threat of war when they signed the Treaty of Versailles. The Indian Civil Servants have their salaries and their pensions protected by the British Government, and the knowledge that further changes in Indian administration are inevitable has possibly persuaded more than one adventurous Englishman to enter the service. The educational and many other services, however, have almost ceased to recruit from England. There are fewer English lawyers, fewer doctors and clergymen in India. England, in fact, is no longer providing India with her professional classes.

There remains the trader. Before the war he took his duties as a member of the governing class seriously. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, while they undermined the Englishman's rule, gave him a wider scope for individual activities. The trader was ready to take his place in the Municipal Corporations and the Legislative Councils. The European Association acquired influence and prestige, and if the British Government and Parliament had attached more importance to its spokesmen—"the men on the spot"—no little time and energy might have been spared. The trader, however, is not always his own master. He represents a firm whose headquarters are in London, and London often fails to understand the special conditions of India or the importance of their representative's political activities. London firms, moreover, are ceasing to attach importance to an English *personnel*. Indians fill the smaller posts formerly held by English juniors. For the sake of escaping the

## THE BRITISH DOMINATION

rigours of a future boycott firms are selecting Indian directorates, and those Indians identify themselves with the Liberals who are shocked by Mr. Nehru's Socialism. The English trading community is thus very much reduced in numbers. Meanwhile the Americans and the Germans—to say nothing of the Japanese—are strengthening their hold. The exclusive clubs are not removed. The Byculla Club with its handsome portico still witnesses to the more spacious days of King William's reign. But the slums of modern Byculla surround it and unpleasant odours invade its grounds. The building, like its gentle and splendid spirit, is out of place. The clubs refuse to admit Indians, even as guests; and it has been left to the Americans to circumvent an exclusiveness so discouraging to good will and good trade. They have brought the Rotary Club to India.

After a certain number of years the trader goes home, and home is always England. The family of Sir Sassoon David—the Mayor of Bombay who greeted Lord Reading on his arrival at the Gateway of India—made India their home, and Bombay owes some of her commercial greatness to the Jewish settlers. The Englishman cannot be persuaded to remain. He must return to the mists and the fogs and find what friends he can in a country where the politest individual is none too willing to hear about the politics of India or the tiger-shooting in the Western Ghats. England has not provided India with a leisured class, and it was not possible to establish a permanent *raj* with a minute garrison, a handful of administrators, a few traders, missionaries and journalists.

And the destinies of the English in India are likely to be affected by the decrease of population in the Mother Country. Before the end of the twentieth

## GOVERNING CLASS

century the population of India may exceed five hundred millions, but the population of England and Wales is expected to fall below twenty millions. The "Little England" of the nineteenth-century Liberals will be realized at last, and the "Little Englanders" may be in no mood either to dispatch ability to India or to accept the Imperial domination of a Canada with more than three times her own population. And who, when the century draws to a close, will deny to the English their superb artistry in action? A people who can prepare against the destruction of their second Empire will not unduly delay their departure from India. The Indian industrialist who seeks an English ally in the future struggle for power seeks too late. Smith *sahib* is coming home.

The record of social and economic achievements during the past century and a half of British rule in India is exceedingly disappointing. But that record, however meagre its details, must be set against the Indian background. There is no freedom from debt, no obvious room for expansion, no effective means of combating the edicts of the caste. Except in the towns there is no scope for ambition. Existence is one cycle after another. Death loses its finality. The pain of man and beast does not prick the conscience. There is incessant breeding in a famished land. Men must pursue a policy more vigorous than the peopling of the jungle with Lord Linlithgow's bulls if they are to chase the shadow of tragedy from their country. There are cries and lamentations in the market-places. The bewildered seek a leader. Those who proclaim a way of life through the crowded land gain a hearing and, when they are men of truth and honour, a following. And the chief among these preachers is Mahatma Gandhi.

CONVICT



## CHAPTER XVII

### THE MARK OF A SAINT

THE clocks of Rome were striking six when a flunkey opened a door within the Villa Venezia and an Indian, clad in a loin-cloth and holding a Kashmir shawl to his breasts, entered a long room which, save for a few chairs and a finely carved table at the far end, was almost bared of furniture. The Indian was followed by his secretary, dressed in *khaddar*, and by an Englishwoman who wore a homespun *saree*. The three people walked with a quick pace down the long room, and as they approached the chairs and the finely carved table, Signor Mussolini, stretching to the full the inches and the feet which his squat frame allow him, rose to greet his visitors. Mr. Gandhi met the Duce's gaze without fear. He has known many of the public men of the world. He was a very young man and reading for the Bar in London when he formed a friendship with an eccentric Indian, Narayan Hemchandra, who desired to meet the cultivators of the simple life. Mohandas Gandhi told him that Benjamin Disraeli once praised Cardinal Manning for his simplicity, and Narayan Hemchandra, who spoke no English, promptly asked for an audience for himself and Mohandas Gandhi. The Cardinal granted this request, and on the appointed day the two men set out for the Archbishop's house; Mohandas Gandhi in a top-hat and a frock-coat, Narayan Hemchandra in a tasselled woollen cap, with an unkempt beard and without tie or collar. During the audience Narayan



## CONVICT

Hemchandra did most of the talking, while Mohandas Gandhi struggled to translate his Gujarati.

There exists no record to show what Cardinal Manning may have thought of his Indian visitors. He made himself accessible to all sorts and conditions of men, and many to whom he gave his blessing he may have soon forgotten. The hawk-like Eminence may not have guessed the curious material which the soul of an undersized Hindu could provide. At such a time, had he chosen to instruct Mohandas Gandhi in the Catholic faith, Cardinal Manning would have found him a willing disciple. The convert might have forsworn the law, for which he had no great aptitude or sympathy, and become a Catholic *sannyasi*, like Bhawani Charan Banerji Vpadyaya, whom friends in ignorance cremated in the orthodox Hindu fashion, or like Animanda, the Catholic friend of Rabindranath Tagore. A Catholic India could have fought for *swaraj* as relentlessly as Southern Ireland fought for a virtual independence. But Cardinal Manning shared with his former friend, William Ewart Gladstone, a reluctance to discuss India. Westminster might become a stepping-stone to Rome, and Rome was the centre of the Catholic world. Beyond the southern shores of the Mediterranean Rome swiftly lost her universality. Goa is but a Catholic fringe of pagan India; and what were the emotional strains of two adolescent Hindus compared with the vindication of Rome's authority in England, the manifold activities of the archdiocese of Westminster, the demands of the dockers in the East End of London? What, in fact, was India? Even a modern Bishop of Fulham may prefer a continental Bradshaw to an atlas. Cardinal Manning gave the two Indians his blessing and let them go. Thereafter their ways parted.

## THE MARK OF A SAINT

Narayan Hemchandra took his tasselled woollen cap and his unkempt beard to the United States, where he was eventually arrested on a charge of having appeared in a public street improperly and indecently attired. Mohandas Gandhi returned with his legal degree to the little Kathiawari State of Porbandar, where his father, his uncle and his grandfather had each been the Dewan.

Some sixteen years later—towards the end of 1896—Mr. Gandhi was sailing with his wife and two sons from Bombay to Durban on board the *Courland*. Another boat—the *Naderi*—had sailed a few days before from Porbandar, and both boats were expected to reach Durban at the same time. Between them they carried some seven or eight hundred Indians. The Europeans of Natal were in no mood to give the Indians a good reception. They were flooding the country with cheap labour and imperilling both the economic and the political status of the Europeans. The Europeans hated the Indians' leader, Mr. Gandhi, and they wished to impress the new Government in Great Britain—particularly the new Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain—with their determination to keep the Indian community in subjection. On the excuse that there had been an outbreak of the bubonic plague earlier in the year, the Natal Government detained the passengers of the *Courland* and the *Naderi* outside the Durban harbour for more than three weeks. The European community was more ruthless than the Natal Government, for it formed a committee of action which threatened the shipowner with complete loss of business if the *Courland* and the *Naderi* did not at once sail for India with all their passengers. It then warned the passengers that everyone who attempted to land would be pushed

## CONVICT

into the sea. The demonstration had gone too far, and the Natal Government, realizing that there might be enquiries from the Colonial Office, lifted the quarantine. The *Courland* and the *Naderi* sailed into the harbour. The passengers landed, and Mr. Gandhi failed to follow the sound advice of the Attorney-General of Natal that he should stay on board the *Courland* until the evening. He was at once recognized in the main street. Hooligans threw stones. Mr. Gandhi reached the police station severely bruised, and when it was thought that he could leave the police station unobserved, he took refuge in the house of a wealthy Indian. The house, however, was soon surrounded by a large European mob intent upon lynching him. Mr. Gandhi escaped from the house disguised as a policeman.

The attack upon Mr. Gandhi was necessarily reported to London, and Mr. Joseph Chamberlain sent a cable, asking the Government of Natal to prosecute the assailants. But Mr. Gandhi would not allow the prosecution to proceed. "If all they heard about me was true," he told the Attorney-General, "it was natural for them to be excited and do something wrong." His written statement was forwarded to the Colonial Office, and without a doubt it helped to ease the tension between the Europeans and Indians of Natal. There is no reason to believe that Mr. Chamberlain himself was impressed.

After the Boer War Mr. Chamberlain went out to South Africa to see the conditions of the country for himself. Mr. Gandhi, as the spokesman of the Indian community, called upon him at Durban. A few courteous words were exchanged and then Mr. Chamberlain dismissed Mr. Gandhi. But Mr. Chamberlain went on to Pretoria, and during the

## THE MARK OF A SAINT

Boer War the English assured the Indians, who were co-operating with them and who, under Mr. Gandhi's leadership, were doing important ambulance work, that the Transvaal was a promised land in which they could live peacefully once it had become a Crown colony. Mr. Gandhi believed, therefore, that it was of the utmost importance that he should meet Mr. Chamberlain again in Pretoria. This, however, the Chief of the Asiatic Department would not permit. In vain Mr. Gandhi pleaded that he had come to Pretoria at the request of his countrymen, for the Chief argued that the Asiatic Department existed solely for expressing the needs of Indians, thus making Mr. Gandhi's representations superfluous. This decision the Indian community deeply resented, and Mr. Chamberlain was compelled to refer to Mr. Gandhi's absence when he eventually received a carefully selected Indian deputation. "Rather than hear the same representatives over and over again," he asked, "is it not better to have someone new?"

In order to keep the archdiocese of Westminster constantly before the notice of Downing Street and the Vatican, Cardinal Manning had to limit his vision and narrow his purpose. In order to preach the Imperialist creed to an insular people Mr. Chamberlain had to forget that the Empire existed for races other than the minority of Anglo-Saxon stock. His was a staccato Empire, and his attitude to the Irish problem and to India shows that he was not so good an Imperialist as the Liberals whom he deserted. There were precipitous limits to his sympathies and understanding. Just as Cardinal Manning was not a man to realize that a youthful barrister, questing unceasingly for the truth, might have become the greatest of all Catholic teachers in India, so Joseph Chamberlain

## CONVICT

was not a man to realize that the representative whom he had no wish to hear "over and over again" would win the sympathies of India as he led a depressed Indian community in triumph against the rulers of the new Union of South Africa, as he humbled a great *raj* and bequeathed to posterity the challenging doctrine of *satyagraha*. For to hear the little man "over and over again" would have saved endless trouble for Joseph Chamberlain, for General Botha and General Smuts, for Lord Reading, Lord Halifax and Lord Willingdon, for Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and the fervent Conservatives who met in the Albert Hall to celebrate the centenary of Joseph Chamberlain's birth.

There is no mystery about Mr. Gandhi's career and teaching, and consequently there is no mystery about his profound and often disturbing influence upon modern India. In the academic sense he is not well read. He does not concern himself with books for which he can find no practical use. He is at heart a pragmatist. What is useless he discards. Many years ago he forsook an uxorious life for a life of celibacy. It was through a long process of trial and error that the dandy in a top-hat and a frock-coat became the half-naked fakir dressed in a loin-cloth and wrapped in a Kashmir shawl. He has reduced his diet and his dress to the barest minimum. Those standards of the Indian peasant which men judged to be inconsistent with human dignity he has made his own, and few men who have seen three-score years and more are as fit as he.

There is to be found the severest economy in his writing. Mr. Gandhi never uses an unnecessary word. He is not economical for the sake of his style, for style in writing, like fashion in dress and lavish-

## THE MARK OF A SAINT

ness in food, is vainglorious. Words must serve no more than their immediate purpose. But style is the man, and the artlessness of Mr. Gandhi's writings and speeches is their strength. There was a time in his youth when he seemed to have committed himself to some useless reading, since he promised an English vegetarian that he would read the Bible. He started dutifully with the first chapter of the Book of Genesis. He nearly came to grief over the Book of Numbers, turned with relief from the exhortations of Malachi and was soon delighting himself with the Sermon on the Mount. He wanted to put all his precepts at once into practice. For him the struggle for simplicity was instinctive. It was not idle curiosity which made him don his top-hat and frock-coat and set off with Narayan Hemchandra to see Cardinal Manning.

Disraeli may not have been wrong when he praised Manning for his simplicity. Manning was a complex character, and so is Mahatma Gandhi. Manning attempted a synthesis between the magnificence of a prince of the Church and the poverty of a humble servant of God. The prince and the servant were sometimes in conflict: the hawk held the purple in his beak. Mr. Gandhi would never have attempted such a synthesis. For him poverty is an excellence. With poverty men control their circumstances, making their bodies the slaves of the spirit. In Mr. Gandhi's *raj* a Viceroy would not receive more than five hundred rupees a month. There is nevertheless a perpetual conflict within him, a conflict between humility and power. He is the son and the grandson of a Dewan. His caste is the moneylender's. The love of intrigue is in his blood. He understands deception, craftiness and cunning, and he is quick to detect them both in his adversaries and in those who profess to be his friends.

## CONVICT

There is not within him enough of the mystic or the dreamer to produce a natural contemplative. His code, his conduct and his teaching have to be practical, and he is willing that they should be judged only by their fruits. Throughout his life he has experimented with truth, and if he writes and talks incessantly of truth it is partly because he knows how difficult is the way of truth. He is not less of a saint because he has sometimes fallen from the way. The mark of a saint is not perfection, but consecration. Whenever his experiments with truth become an experience of truth, they make him strong, and throughout the life of the little man—so frequently reviled and misunderstood—there is a serene consistency of purpose. His fads about food, his strange vows, his colonies in South Africa and his *ashram* on the banks of the Sabarmati river, his command that men should spin and weave; all fit into an intelligible pattern. His mind and his methods, like the mind and methods of any other great reformer or teacher, can be studied. Mr. Gandhi has nothing to hide.

A man who organized an Indian Ambulance Corps during the South African War and again during the Zulu Rebellion was not the first of the pacifists. He believed that Englishmen were engaged in a just war when they fought the Boers. He retained his pride in the British connection, though he had to endure long sentences of imprisonment and put to the test the cardinal doctrine of his life—*satyagraha*, the weapon of non-violence coupled with an active love for the aggressor—before many unjust disabilities were removed from the Indian residents of South Africa and he could make his peace with General Smuts.

Men more intellectual than he is himself believed

## THE MARK OF A SAINT

that *satyagraha* provided the moral equivalent for war which the modern world, so declared William James, was seeking. For although he is not himself the first of the pacifists, Mr. Gandhi is almost the first among them to recognize the necessity for struggle. Without a struggle the Indians of South Africa would never have won concessions from their uncoloured governors. Without a struggle the cause of truth and justice could not prevail. Mr. Gandhi did, however, fashion a new weapon for those who struggle for the sake of righteousness. The new weapon is without doubt a moral equivalent for violence. Mr. Gandhi's approach to political and social problems is practical and not intellectual. He would have been the last person, in August, 1914, to pretend that the invaders of Belgium could have been driven from the banks of the Meuse by a national experiment in *satyagraha*. On the contrary, he convinced himself that once again the English were fighting for a just cause. He returned to India for the special purpose of recruiting his countrymen for the war. Those four years in India disillusioned him. There were the disasters of the Mesopotamian campaign. There was the stubborn refusal of the great majority of Indians to concern themselves with the war, and when the war ended there was the customary determination of the Government to tone down or to ignore its war-time promises. There were the Rowlatt Acts and a host of administrative actions to show that the directive mind of the Government was alien to the spirit of the Indian people and that, however much Mr. Gandhi may have liked individual Englishmen who were members or servants of the Government, the administrative machine was, in his own word, "satanic."

It was not until he had reached this conclusion that



## CONVICT

he decided to apply to the Indian struggle the weapon of *satyagraha*. And his application of the weapon seemed to his critics to be fitful and inane. He invited the Provinces to begin civil disobedience on their own responsibility. Plans were well advanced, when the present Duke of Windsor landed in Bombay, a city which was supposed to be observing a complete *hartal*, or day of mourning. The *hartal*, however, was made the excuse for rioting. More than fifty people were killed before Mr. Gandhi appeared at the scene of the rioting. He was cheered, and with an angry gesture he commanded the rioters to be silent. He subsequently expressed his sorrow for the happenings in Bombay. In penitence he imposed upon himself a weekly fast and day of silence, and he withdrew his sanction for the Provinces to begin *satyagraha*.

A few weeks later he prepared for a new experiment. Bardoli, one of the richest districts in Gujerat, was to begin *satyagraha*. The peasants of Bardoli would pay no taxes and they would defy the Government on all possible occasions. Once the experiment in Bardoli had proved successful, other districts were to follow its example. Mr. Gandhi arranged that seven days' notice should be given to the Government. On the eighth day—February 9, 1922—the peasants of Bardoli would become *satyagrahis*. Before the eighth day, however, a mob at Chauri-Chaura surrounded the police barracks, set them on fire and burned the besieged policemen to death. For a second time a grieved leader abandoned his plans for *satyagraha*. "I know," he declared, "that the drastic reversal of practically the whole of the aggressive programme may be politically unsound, but there is no doubt that it is religiously sound. The country will have gained by my humiliation and confession of error. . . .

## THE MARK OF A SAINT

For confession of error is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner and brighter. I feel stronger for my confession. . . . The tragedy of Chauri-Chaura is really the index-finger. It shows the way India may easily go if drastic precautions be not taken. If we are not to evolve violence out of non-violence, it is quite clear that we must hastily retrace our steps and re-establish an atmosphere of peace, and not think of starting mass civil disobedience until we are sure of peace being retained. . . . Let the opponent glory in our humiliation and so-called defeat. It is better to be charged with cowardice than to be guilty of denial of our oath and sin against God."

The opponent lost no opportunity to glory in Mr. Gandhi's "humiliation and so-called defeat." There was strong disapproval both within the Congress Working Committee, which was already assembled in Bardoli, and among the rank and file. It was only a few weeks since the Irish rebels had snatched a Treaty from the British Government, and what manner of man was this leader with a South African reputation who preached non-violence and proclaimed the efficiency of *satyagraha*, and yet declined to use his favourite weapon because there was rioting in Bombay or because a few policemen were burned in Chauri-Chaura? There seemed to be no rhyme or reason in his actions. His popularity began to wane, and it was within the hour of his "humiliation and so-called defeat" that Lord Reading ordered his arrest. The Viceroy's shrewdness taught him that the country would take the news of Mr. Gandhi's arrest calmly.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### ROMAN CONQUEROR

MR. GANDHI could not have acted otherwise. He is not concerned with *satyagraha* as a remote ideal, but with *satyagraha* as a practical weapon used for a practical purpose. There could have been no nation-wide *satyagraha* in 1922 without bloodshed. Ignorance, fear and passion were bound to break the bonds of discipline. Chauri-Chaura was, indeed, "the index-finger." What was impossible in 1922 would have been impossible in any year. So, at least, the critics argued. They were convinced that Mr. Gandhi would never return to public life, still less to leadership. For more than five years their argument appeared to have been justified. But because Mr. Gandhi is a pragmatist, because he judges the hour when his favourite weapon can be used, and because he—alone of all Indian leaders—can command the following of a vast unlettered peasantry, the discredited leader of 1922 became the national figurehead before the civil disobedience movement of 1930. He had judged the hour, the following and the capacity for discipline. Intensive boycott hit the English hard. The suffering of their countrymen forced the delegates at the Round Table Conference to discuss realities and to hammer out a few essential agreements. Without the civil disobedience there would have been no unifying purpose among the delegates at St. James's Palace, and without civil disobedience concessions from the British Government would have been exceedingly hard to

## ROMAN CONQUEROR

obtain. Ignorance, fear and passion still raged through the country. Terrorism continued in Bengal. No sooner had Lord Irwin and Mr. Gandhi signed the Delhi Pact than a hideous riot began in Cawnpore, and the Mohammadan quarter of the city was almost completely destroyed. But the terrorism in Bengal and the rioting in Cawnpore were isolated activities. They were unconnected with the civil disobedience movement, though they helped to illustrate the dangers of a country in which Mr. Gandhi and his lieutenants imposed the discipline of non-violence.

Nor was civil disobedience called off until some important concessions had been obtained, and until it was certain that the future Government of India, whether federal or unitary, would be responsible to an Indian legislature. Civil disobedience had, in fact, effected a revolution, and it was a bloodless revolution. Those who stress the few murders and riots which occurred during the civil disobedience movement of 1930 can know nothing of the toll of human life which a political revolution in an European country usually exacts. They can know nothing of the bloodshed in Ireland from the Easter Rebellion of 1916 to the defeat of Mr. Cosgrave at the polls. The bloodlessness of the civil disobedience movement gave it a super-national significance. Non-violence acquired the impelling power of a new idea. People remembered the words of William James, that the world was seeking a moral equivalent for war.

It was natural, therefore, that a mixed reception awaited Mr. Gandhi when he sailed away from Bombay for the second session of the Round Table Conference. The Quakers, consistent exponents of passive resistance, greeted him. The dons of Oxford gathered round him on Boar's Hill. Mr. Gandhi spoke at Eton,

## CONVICT

at Balliol and at Oxford House in Bethnal Green. He talked with Lord Lothian and Lady Astor. He greeted Mr. Bernard Shaw, Mr. Charles Chaplin and the Archbishop of Canterbury. He stayed at the Deanery in Canterbury and the Palace in Chichester. He made a pilgrimage to Lancashire. But many of the people with whom he wished to talk he could not see. He wanted to discuss the Congress viewpoint with its staunchest opponents. He was anxious to meet Lord Rothermere, Lord Beaverbrook and Mr. Winston Churchill. He talked with Lord Castlerosse, but Lord Castlerosse is not Lord Beaverbrook, and when Mr. Randolph Churchill sent in his card at St. James's Palace, Mr. Gandhi hastened to greet him. He was soon to learn that Mr. Randolph Churchill sought a journalistic interview and brought with him no message from his father.

Those who wished to make Mr. Gandhi appear as a lost leader had an easy task. In a sense, he was undoubtedly lost in London. He had no personal desire to leave India, and he never forgot that he was a leader responsible to Congress for his political actions. The Conference discussed the future constitution, whose framework Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru had already designed. Constitution-making was not Mr. Gandhi's *métier*. And he encountered special difficulties. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald did not appear to like him. A financial crisis, a change of government, a whirlwind election and a departure from the Gold Standard robbed the Conference of its journalistic appeal. Mr. Gandhi might have died in a side-street of Bow and the newspapers would not have devoted very much space to the event. He left London a marked failure, and for the second time men predicted that he had ceased to be an influence in Indian politics.

## ROMAN CONQUEROR

In Paris, where there were no shadows of the Conference table, Mr. Gandhi was welcomed with enthusiasm. At Villeneuve he stayed with his first biographer, M. Romain Rolland, and when he reached Rome he asked to see the Pope and Signor Mussolini. Pope Pius the Eleventh was unable to grant him an audience, but Signor Mussolini agreed to meet him. The two men were not long in conversation, and what they said has never been reported. But it is likely that Mr. Gandhi impressed the Duce rather more than he had once impressed Cardinal Manning or Joseph Chamberlain, for when Mr. Gandhi, his secretary and Miss Slade rose to go, Signor Mussolini accompanied them down the full length of the long room to the door. And next morning he sent Mr. Gandhi a list of the buildings which he ought to see—the clinics, hospitals and schools of Rome. Signor Mussolini's list arrived while his friends were debating whether Mr. Gandhi ought to see St. Peter's or the Forum. He had only a day to spare. The friends debated over Signor Mussolini's list while Mr. Gandhi, evading their disputes, drove down to see Dr. Montessori and her Roman school.

Save for a member of the Italian Royal Family, Signor Mussolini was the last of the celebrities whom Mr. Gandhi met before he sailed from Brindisi for Bombay. He may have thought that his courtesy call would have no political consequences. But as the *Pilsna* was making her way towards Port Said the ship's wireless news told him that he had given an interview in the *Giornale d'Italia*, saying:

"The Round Table Conference had been for Indians a long and slow agony. It had, however, served to make quite clear to the British authorities the spirit of the Indian nation and of its leaders and to mask

the true intentions of England. He was returning to India in order to restart at once his struggle against England, which was to take the form of passive resistance and the boycott of British goods. He considered that the boycott would now prove a powerful means of rendering more acute the British crisis, already difficult through the devaluation of the currency and unemployment. The closing of the Indian market to all British products would signify a substantial reduction of English industrial activity, an increase of unemployment and a new depreciation of the pound.

"Mr. Gandhi concluded his remarks by lamenting that few European countries had hitherto shown much interest in the Indian problem. That was a pity, since an independent and prosperous India would mean a richer market for the products of other nations, and Indian freedom would be manifested through commercial and intellectual exchange with all countries."

Mr. Gandhi never gave this interview. He interviewed no journalists while he was in Italy. Except for Signor Mussolini himself he met no one who had any present or former association with daily journalism. Mr. Gandhi went ashore at Aden, called on the Resident and denied that an interview had been given to the *Giornale d'Italia*. He also sent a long cable to the Secretary of State for India, Sir Samuel Hoare. Someone had lied—either Mr. Gandhi, apostle of truth, or the representative of the *Giornale d'Italia*; and to judge from the tone of most of the London newspapers, the offender was not the representative of the *Giornale d'Italia*. There were bitter recriminations in England and India. Mr. Gandhi left the Western world, to which he has not returned, with a parting kick. Even so sympathetic a writer as Dr. Edward Thompson was to write: "No episode in his whole

## ROMAN CONQUEROR

career has done his reputation graver harm. Unless it is cleared up, he will not be regarded in Continental Europe as a saint again. It was part of the reason why his arrest was taken so quietly in India."

What, perhaps, made it difficult for many people to accept Mr. Gandhi's denial was the authoritative tone of the interview. No journalist could have invented such an interview unless he had a close knowledge not only of conditions in India, but of the issues which were vexing some of the delegates at the Round Table Conference. Who in Italy cared to make an intimate study of India? Who in Italy would seek to discredit the man who weakened the *raj* with the weapon of *satyagraha*? Who, indeed? But the Viceroy and the Governors of the Provinces in Italian East Africa, the officials in Ethiopia, the engineers who are building the strategic highways, owe their positions to a man who has not misread the history of British rule in India. From the knowledge of this rule he derived his knowledge of the British character. There was far more calculation and far less bluff in the Ethiopian adventure than English observers have cared to admit. The fakir who troubled himself with Quakers and Bishops, dons and Lancashire mill-workers, completed his European visit with a courtesy call upon the one man who should have been made to realize the power of *satyagraha*. As the clocks of Rome struck six and Mr. Gandhi walked quickly down the long room, he did not know what Signor Mussolini was purporting to do. Nor did he know that the *Pilsna*, whose wireless news told him of the interview with the *Giornale d'Italia*, would within four years take Italian troops to the coast of Eritrea. Cardinal Manning and Joseph Chamberlain were not less discerning than was Mr. Gandhi in the Villa Venezia.



## CONVICT

For *satyagraha* may yet confound the Roman conqueror. It was developed on African soil and it may be well suited to African needs. The Emperor of Ethiopia has stated his case at the League Council. He returned to Geneva when the League Assembly voted upon the right of the Ethiopian delegates to retain their seats. And now he knows that from the nations of the world no hope can come. Poison gas, aeroplanes which encountered no enemy in the air, and an advance upon Addis Ababa under the cover of African troops have won from the nations of the world the tributes of success. There remains the duty of pacifying the country, and Signor Mussolini's knowledge of British history in India will have taught him that complete pacification is a long process. Charles Napier found it no easy task to effect the pacification of Sind. Not for many years after the annexation of Burma was the country completely pacified. The pacification of Ethiopia may be a very long or a very short period, and, perhaps, dropping leaders from an aeroplane has a more salutary effect upon the followers than shooting them—in the mid-Victorian fashion—from guns. Were the Emperor of Ethiopia to return to his country and put himself at the head of the troops who were still loyal to him, he might give to the apathetic nations an assurance that he still believed himself to be an Emperor. But his life would be a bandit leader's. We expected no such heroism from the last Moghul Emperor of India, who met an exile's death in Rangoon.

There is, however, the weapon of the weak. It is a practical certainty that some of the several thousand Indian traders who lived in Ethiopia before the Italian occupation have discussed with their Ethiopian neighbours the use of *satyagraha* in Natal, the Transvaal

## ROMAN CONQUEROR

and in India. Somewhere in the highlands of Ethiopia the seeds of a new *satyagraha* movement may be already sown. They will not have fallen upon rocky ground, for *satyagraha* is not alien to the Christian ethics which the Coptic Church has endeavoured to preserve. Signor Mussolini understood the significance of his Indian visitors, and someone in Rome appreciated the importance of discrediting Mr. Gandhi. Nevertheless, the cause of non-violence is not lost, and Mr. Gandhi's influence in India is by no means at an end.

## CHAPTER XIX

### PEASANT'S RAJ

INDIA is said to have two minds: the Brahman and the Buddhist. The one represents the ideal of fulfilment and the other represents the ideal of negation. Dr. Rabindranath Tagore is the best-known exponent of the first ideal, and Mr. Gandhi is the foremost representative of the second. Mr. Gandhi practises and preaches a stern asceticism. He will endure no vanity of possession or speech or learning. He has seen in South Africa, in England and in India a cultured class divorced from the people. He knows that the spread of the English language throughout India is a class distinction. The Indian who speaks English ceases to speak Gujarati. He is a man apart. Thomas Babington Macaulay's famous Minute on Education dictated that henceforward English should be the language of the polite and official classes. Instead of English becoming a bond of unity between the peoples of one country and another, it has separated one Indian from another. The colleges and universities of India remove the student from the life of the peasant. And this, so Mr. Gandhi convinced himself, is a fundamental error. The heart of India is the heart of any one of her seven hundred thousand villages. Without representative institutions or an administration based upon the needs of the villages India cannot hope to escape from a "satanic Government." The men of learning should not spend their lives apart from the village communities to which they belong. And their

## PEASANT'S RAJ

learning, as Mr. Gandhi was bound to insist, should be practical.

Accordingly, he founded his own University within a few hundred yards of the Sabarmati *ashram*. Here Gujarati youths learn to spin and weave. Here they study all that is best in the religions of India. "The vast treasures of Sanskrit and Arabic, Persian and Pali and Magadhi have to be ransacked to discover wherein lies the source of strength for the nation. The ideal is not merely to feed on or repeat the ancient cultures, but to build a new culture based on the traditions of the past and enriched by the experiences of later times. The ideal is a synthesis of the different cultures that have come to stay in India, that have influenced Indian life, and that, in their turn, have themselves been influenced by the spirit of the soil. This synthesis will naturally be of the *swadeshi* type, where each culture is assured its legitimate place, and not of the American pattern, where one dominant culture absorbs the rest and where the aim is not toward harmony but toward an artificial and enforced unity." Mr. Gandhi believed that "ere long the suicidal cleavage between the educated and the uneducated will be bridged. And as an effect of giving an industrial education to the genteel folks, and a literary education to the industrial classes, the unequal distribution of wealth and social discontent will be considerably checked."

The purpose of Mr. Gandhi's National University was for long misunderstood. Academic minds opposed its foundation. Without scholarship and science and culture, they argued, India could not make good her claim to deserve *swaraj*. *Swadeshi* could not usurp *swaraj*. Like Macaulay himself, they were not prepared to "countenance at the public expense medical

## CONVICT

doctrines which would disgrace an English farrier, astronomy which would move laughter in girls at an English boarding-school, history abounding with kings thirty feet high and reigns thirty thousand years long, and geography made up of seas of treacle and seas of butter." Their views were well expressed by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore. Unity, he argued, is truth. Division is evil. "Unity is that which embraces and understands everything; consequently, it cannot be attained through negation. The present attempt to separate our spirit from that of the Occident is a tentative of spiritual suicide. . . . The present age has been dominated by the Occident, because the Occident had a mission to fulfil. We of the Orient should learn from the Occident. It is regrettable, of course, that we had lost the power of appreciating our own culture, and therefore did not know how to assign Western culture to its right place. But to say that it is wrong to co-operate with the West is to encourage the worst form of provincialism and can produce nothing but intellectual indigence. The problem is a world problem. No nation can find its own salvation by breaking away from others. We must all be saved, or we must all perish together."

To those words most of the enlightened Indians would have readily assented. Like the Turks under Kemal Ataturk and the Iranians under Riza Shah, they looked westwards. They accepted the Western principle of self-determination which the Treaty of Versailles was supposed to enshrine. The Khilafatist movement was an Eastward movement, and it came to grief chiefly because the best Mohammadan minds were looking to the West for enlightenment. The standard of life in England or America was the standard of life which they wanted for themselves. They may

## PEASANT'S RAJ

have disliked the fret and hurry of the West, for in tropical sunlight or the languid evening air fret and hurry have no purpose. But they demanded leisure and freedom from financial or economic care. They wished, in fact, to hold their own with the leisured classes of the West, and to meet the savants and artists of the West on terms of equality. They were not struggling for a *swaraj* which, both economically and culturally, was a pauper's *raj*.

The wise men who shook their heads as Mr. Gandhi taught Gujarati youths to spin and weave in his National University forgot the plight of their own intellectuals. The Universities of India have failed to provide the intellectual with the necessary scope and environment. Thousands of students struggle every year for their degrees, without which they cannot enter the Government service or the professional classes. They are not encouraged to live upon the soil, and, indeed, their training does not permit them to lead a useful life upon the soil. A few succeed in their professional careers. They secure good posts in the Government service or they reap a substantial reward at the Bar. But even the few who succeed usually make their success dependent upon qualities other than their own industry and ability: they have influential friends in the Government service or at the Bar: their relatives are wealthy or their caste is well favoured. And of what account are the few successes when the great majority of graduates sweat for their miserable rupees and feel that the ties of a vast family, the edicts of a caste, the impersonal ordinances of the Government prevent them from exerting an individual influence or from moulding the conditions of their own environment? The curriculum of an Indian University may be far from satisfactory. The standard required

## CONVICT

from those who wish to enter the University may be too low. There remains the greater tragedy that frustration is the common lot even of the student who deserved to graduate. The intellectual is not wanted. In the contemptuous phrase of Anglo-India, he is the *babu*. Dr. Rabindranath Tagore may be a great sage, but he owes very much to his family, and his family in turn owe very much to their economic circumstances. The art and culture of Bengal is patrician. The patricians in England gave us our Shelleys and our Swinburnes. The revolutionaries of England have usually been recruited from the upper classes, and it was the upper classes of India who initiated the movement towards *swaraj*.

But *swaraj* cannot rest upon upper-class supporters. *Swaraj* must be a peasant's *raj*. The upper classes are not of themselves strong enough to resist an alien domination. Nor are they of themselves strong enough to control the fury which, sooner or later, the pressure of population is bound to provoke. They will acquire no support from the intellectuals, for the intellectuals are an excluded and necessarily an embittered class. A Viceroy has shown that they can be muzzled by a mass incarceration. In former days reactionary critics used to argue that the Congress represented only the vocal opinion of an *intelligentsia* divorced from the peasantry. Mr. Gandhi has done more than any other man living to take the sting from that argument. With a *babu raj* he will have nothing to do.

His message is for the peasant. He is understood of the people. Those who cannot follow the arguments expressed in the simplest Hindi nevertheless see in Mr. Gandhi a saviour. He is nothing less. He has bridged the gulf between the intellectual and the peasant. His leadership testifies that the peasant shall

## PEASANT'S RAJ

be lord in the new *raj*. Thus his National University acquires authority and prestige. It is the powerhouse from which Mr. Gandhi discharges new leaders for the peasantry. Of what advantage is it that there are enlightened Indians who preach the unity "which embraces and understands everything" and who fear the provincialism which "can produce nothing but intellectual indigence"? Mr. Gandhi thinks primarily of the peasant and his needs. He does not look for support or encouragement from the West. "One must not expect the people of one country," he replied to Dr. Tagore, "to provide for the needs of another, even for philanthropic reasons, and even if it were possible, it would not be desirable. . . . The true follower of *swadeshi* does not forget that every human being is his brother, but that it is incumbent on him to fulfil the task his particular environment has laid down for him. Just as we work out our salvation in the century in which we are born, we should serve the country in which we are born." On a later occasion he wrote: "We should not mingle in the lives of men or peoples whose ideals are different from ours. . . . Every man is a brook. Every nation is a river. They must follow their course, clear and pure, till they reach the Sea of Salvation, where all will blend."

Though the enlightened men look to the West for salvation, their own enlightenment rests upon insecure foundations. Freedom of speech, freedom of access to the scholarship and science of the Western world, and abundant leisure appear to be the privileges of the parasitic when their possessors are divorced from the lives of the peasantry. Unless their culture, their learning and their leadership are rooted in the peasantry, they cannot hope to bring either spiritual or economic salvation to their country. And



## CONVICT

yet the peasant's poverty involves a perpetual struggle against starvation. In the Punjab, which used to be considered an agriculturally advanced Province, over fifty-five per cent. of the cultivators cultivate less than five acres, and the income of such a cultivator in 1930-1931 averaged forty rupees. More often than not, a visitor to a remote Punjabi village will find it impossible to obtain any change for a silver rupee, for the equivalent in cash of a shilling and sixpence is beyond the immediate resources of the villagers. The peasant under the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms had no voice in the administration of the country. Apart from Burma and Assam, there were thirty-two seats specially reserved for the land-holders in the Provincial Legislative Councils, and yet out of the total number of six hundred seats no less than three hundred and six happened to be held by landlords or landowners. The Report of the Simon Commission discussed at great length the representation of the English, whose numbers "are no fair measure of the contribution they make to the country or of the influence they exert." It expressed anxiety about the representation of the Anglo-Indians, the Christians, the labour organizations and the Untouchables. The Report did not mention the tenant. With a few exceptions the delegates to the Round Table Conference were landowners or landlords. Yet the landed classes had to receive special representation, and the English Press devoted not a little space to the movements of *zamindaris* like the Maharajah of Dharbhangar and the Rajah of Bobbili. The loss of some of the Maharajah of Dharbhangar's jewels provided a nation perplexed by the financial crisis with some light relief. .

What hope was there that the provincial legislatures, of which more than half the members were landlords

or landowners, would understand the needs of the impoverished peasantry? And what hope can there be that provincial autonomy will bring succour to the peasantry so long as landowners and industrialists dominate the Assemblies? It was Mr. Gandhi, not Edwin Montagu, who succeeded in disturbing the "pathetic contentment" of the Indian masses. He is teaching them that theirs is the kingdom and the glory. He is one with them, and when he entered Buckingham Palace he wore his loin-cloth and Kashmir shawl as proudly as William Booth had worn the uniform of the Salvation Army General. Nor was his regard for the peasant confined to gestures while he was in London: for his first speech at the Round Table Conference was a spirited argument for a representation based upon the village communities. He agreed with Sir Samuel Hoare, who had spoken before him, that election to the Central Legislature should be indirect. He then proceeded to develop his *panchayat* scheme. Each of the Indian villages was to elect a representative who should meet the representatives of a group of villages: the group representatives would elect a district representative: the district representatives would elect their member for the Provincial Legislative Council: and the Legislative Councils would elect the members for the Central Legislature. Thus representation in the Central Legislature would be based ultimately upon India's peasantry, and whatever the jobbery, the bribery and intrigue which the *panchayat* system might involve there is not the slightest doubt that such a Legislature would be more responsive to the needs and aspirations of the peasants than the Federal Legislature which India's rulers intend to inaugurate before the turn of the decade. At one blow it would destroy the communal representation

## CONVICT

which for more than a quarter of a century has poisoned the political life of India.

Mr. Gandhi was not to have his way: there were said to be practical difficulties. Yet his allegiance to the peasants continues. He has quitted the Sabarmati *ashram*, which was within view of the cotton mills of Ahmedabad, for the inaccessible village of Wardha in the Central Provinces. He has persuaded the Congress always to hold its annual meeting in some carefully selected rural district, so that the peasants may realize that the Congress exists and works specially for their benefit. He still exhorts them to spin and weave. The earnings from spinning and weaving are inconsiderable. So, unhappily, is the peasant's income, and, at least, spinning and weaving provide for the peasant and his family an occupation during the long months when they were formerly inactive. Mr. Gandhi endeavours to remove the evil excrescences from a religion deeply rooted in the affections and loyalties of the peasant. For Untouchability he can find no excuse or justification. He has given to the Untouchables the gracious name of Harijans: they are "God's creatures." Under his impelling influence caste Hindus are opening many of their temples to the Harijans.

But of what advantage is it that temples should be opened to the Harijans when they are denied access to the village well, the village school and the village gossip? Of what advantage is it to open the temple when men are ceasing to believe in the gods? Discordant voices are heard throughout the cities and the towns. The Marxist sees in Mr. Gandhi a reactionary who wishes to perpetuate the division between the capitalist and the wage-slave. And Marxism attracts the intelligent Indian, though the cause of the attraction is not exclusively economic. The evils against

## PEASANT'S RAJ

which the intelligent Indian contends are too formidable for individual effort. Ignorance and superstition gather strength from a family and a caste which never leave the individual alone. Communalism, like poverty, is a festering cancer. When, therefore, the Bolshevik leaders determined to destroy the authority and influence of the Church in Russia, many Indians watched the attack upon ecclesiastical domination with the deepest sympathy. Without a conventional belief in God there could be no justification for communalism, for the perpetual friction between Mohammadan and Hindu, for the estrangement of the twice-born from the depressed, for a Viceroy's belief that the British *raj* was the work of Providence, or for an Imam whose vast ecclesiastical revenues have brought profit to Ascot, Epsom and Newmarket. Destroy God, and his Indian has a chance to banish the deep-seated evils of Hindustan. With the evils will go many strange and fashionable doctrines. Of necessity the new rationalists are impatient with the claims of *satyagraha*. Without God there can be no *satyagraha*. Mr. Gandhi has won godly men to the philosophy of non-violence, but for men who have cast God from their minds only the weapons of a sullen disobedience, craftiness, deceit or violence are available: the end can justify the means. It was thus a religious movement against which Lord Halifax and Lord Willingdon contended. India has still to decide whether the triumph of non-violence over violence shall be permanent.

There are limits to Mr. Gandhi's influence because there are limitations to his intellectual grasp. During his formative years in South Africa he was troubled by racial rather than economic considerations. His years in India are marked by a concern for the peasant rather than for the industrial worker. Throughout his stay in

## CONVICT

the Sabarmati *ashram* he used to represent the mill-workers of Ahmedabad whenever a dispute between them and their employers was referred to arbitration. There is no doubt that his influence has secured for the industrial worker in Ahmedabad a better economic status than he is likely to attain in the richer industrial city of Bombay. Yet his views on industry are scarcely more comprehensive than those of the pre-war trade unionist in London. After he had called off the last civil disobedience movement, he quitted the Sabarmati *ashram* for the village of Wardha, and the mill-workers of Ahmedabad have been deprived of their exalted and self-appointed representative. The Collector of Poona, visiting the Yeravda Gaol in the spring of 1932, found Mr. Gandhi studying a treatise on Economics. "Ah, Mr. Gandhi," said the Collector, "if only you had taken to reading Economics sooner, you might have saved yourself no end of trouble." But the reading of a new generation does not cease with the *laissez-faire* economics of John Stuart Mill. There is a deepening cleavage between the opinion of the Right and the opinion of the Left. Governing classes and the police are on the watch. Communistic tendencies are suspect. The "hidden hand of Russia" can do many things, except hide. Trade union leaders complain of the powerful hostility of the police, and even the Royal Commission on Indian Labour, which had for its chairman a former Speaker of the House of Commons, encountered some unreasonable difficulties when it toured through India in 1930. It is easy to create the illusion that a trade union leader is actually a communist. A Government which could face the "hidden hand of Russia" with any sense of proportion would never have consented to the degrading farce of the Meerut trial. But the lack of sympathy towards

## PEASANT'S RAJ

trade union leaders and the Meerut trial are symptoms of the deepening cleavage. Neutrality and detachment are becoming impossible to maintain, and Mr. Gandhi's refusal to commit himself to an ideology which he does not profess to understand has lost him his following among the advanced *intelligentsia*.

Moreover, religious sentiment and secular opinion are divided by Mr. Gandhi's praise of poverty. The cult of simplicity has very much to commend it, if only to remind Anglo-India and the India of the princely palaces that pomp and ceremony and the building of a new capital city deserve neither the envy nor the admiration of an impoverished country. None the less, Mr. Gandhi's asceticism has made him a reactionary. He is showing his hundreds of thousands of followers how to accept the lowering standards of rural India. Like John Wesley, unconsciously preparing men and women whose treasure was laid in heaven to submit to economic exploitation from the early industrialists, Mr. Gandhi establishes no effective safeguards against the exploitation of the peasant or the industrial worker. He sees that power must reside in the peasant, though he does not recognize that the peasant must increase his personal wants. There can be no permanent salvation for the peasantry, except through worldliness. The time has come for the lieutenants to part company with the ascetic. New problems confront them. There are certain economic factors which they must face. The separation of Burma will make India, for the first time in her history, a food-importing country and so destroy the last chance of converting India into a self-sufficient State. The lieutenants must decide whether industrial development shall bear an ordered relation to the peasant's *raj*, and whether there shall be enmity or understanding with Japan, whose cheap goods flood

## CONVICT

the country while British and Indian troops maintain the peace. The Indian mill-worker, like the mill-workers in Lancashire, can wear socks that come from Japan.

New voices are needed. But so decisive has been Mr. Gandhi's influence, despite its obvious limitations, that the men who will command a hearing must have followed Mr. Gandhi with a frank loyalty and known from experience where he has been strong and where he is weak. It is significant that no one doubts who Mr. Gandhi's successor will be. A Kashmiri Brahman, an old Harrovian, a Cambridge graduate, a bold admirer of Moscow, and a man who claims to possess a modern mind is a strange successor to a saint who spins and weaves and observes long penitential fasts and weekly days of silence. Jawaharlal Nehru has nevertheless endured the discipline of great suffering. He believes that non-violence will bring to India her final victory.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE OPEN SEA

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU sat conversing with some thirty Englishmen while the monsoon rains beat against the walls of the verandah outside their dining-room.. It was the first time that any of the Englishmen had met him, and among the older men there were many vocal complaints that some of their own compatriots had invited a revolutionary firebrand to be their guest. It was true that the Pact recently signed between Lord Irwin and Mr. Gandhi had brought a truce to civil disobedience, and that Indians and Englishmen were meeting each other on the friendliest of terms. It was true also that the young man's father, Motilal Nehru, had been a prince of hosts in Allahabad and Delhi, and if Harrow and Cambridge cannot make a Kashmiri Brahman respectable, nothing ever will. But a Socialism which flirts with Communistic Russia, outspoken dislike for the Pact between the Government and the Congress, contempt for the princely order and the mulcting landlord were dangerous credentials. The English community does not like the intellectual.

There was nothing new for Jawaharlal Nehru to say. Like his own leader, Mr. Gandhi, he has nothing to hide. He believes in, and practises, freedom of speech. He has visited most of the European countries. He was thoroughly at home in the pre-Hitler Berlin, in Vienna and in Paris. He realizes the significance of international affairs and he is able to see the British *raj*, against which he struggles, in reasonable per-



spective. But his intellectual integrity, his honesty and humour, his social and personal graciousness were evident to all who had been dining with him, and he might have gone far towards converting his English hosts if he had not resolutely refused to admit that the British *raj* conferred substantial advantages upon his own country. There are, perhaps, many Englishmen in India who willingly agree that the time has come for their own departure: the British *raj* has fulfilled its mission. But a denial that the British had any mission to fulfil beyond securing commercial gain for their own country the contemporary Englishman finds hard to accept. Milton should have written about God's Englishman when Catherine of Braganza was bringing with her the islands of Bombay for her dowry.

To all the familiar apologies for British rule Jawaharlal Nehru had ready answers. There had been great changes throughout the world since the British became dominant in India. The American colonies have converted themselves into the wealthiest and the most advanced nation in the world. Japan has cast aside her medieval torpor. Soviet Russia throbs with new life. The British, who for many decades had an entirely free hand in India, seldom attempted to force the pace. They have built roads, railways, schools and colleges. But behind the building there was no spiritual vigour. Jawaharlal Nehru is fond of reminding his friends that Fascist Italy began her career with a campaign against ignorance. Gentile called for "a frontal attack on illiteracy. That gangrenous plague, which is rotting our body politic, must be extirpated with a hot iron." A few years later Mr. Nehru committed his arguments to the written word. "An authoritarian system of government," he wrote, "and especially one that is foreign, must encourage a psy-



MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU *1947-1964*



chology of subservience and try to limit the mental outlook and horizon of the people. It must crush much that is finest in youth—enterprise, spirit of adventure, originality, ‘pep’—and encourage sneakishness, rigid conformity and a desire to cringe and please the bosses. . . . To the British we must be grateful for one splendid gift of which they were the bearers, the gift of science and its rich offspring. It is difficult, however, to forget or view with equanimity the efforts of the British Government in India to encourage the disruptive, obscurantist, reactionary, sectarian and opportunist elements in the country.”

They are hard words, but not harder than the words spoken to his English guests during a monsoon evening in 1931. Mr. Nehru may be less persistent than Mr. Gandhi in preaching the necessity for truth, but he is not less persistent in practising it. Truthfulness is one of the qualities which explain his distinctive charm. It is also one of the qualities which make him a contentious President of the Congress. He will permit no personal deceit. Mr. Gandhi could sign the Pact with Lord Irwin, but it must not be supposed that Mr. Nehru approved it. Civil disobedience was temporarily at an end, but it must not be thought that Mr. Nehru would forget the peasants in the United Provinces who were experiencing the greatest difficulties in the payments of their rent. The Young Europeans might invite him to dinner, but they must not leave the dinner-table with the impression that Mr. Nehru was secretly an admirer of the English or that he would fall for any honeyed words, uttered with complete sincerity, about a new style of partnership between Englishman and Indian.

To begin with, there is no secrecy about Mr. Nehru's admiration for the English. He is at home with them.

## CONVICT

He reads their minds and understands their prejudices. He may not have liked Harrow, but the old Harrovian tie has not disappeared from his wardrobe. He was happy in Cambridge, where his general attitude to life had been "a vague kind of cyrenaicism, partly natural to youth, partly the influence of Oscar Wilde and Walter Pater." He lived for a time in London "trying to ape to some extent the prosperous but somewhat empty-headed Englishman who is called 'a man about town.' This soft and pointless existence, needless to say, did not improve me in any way. My early enthusiasms began to tone down and the only thing that seemed to go up was my conceit." Early associations with England, however, are not allowed to mitigate the sentence of death which he and many of his Congress friends have pronounced upon the British *raj*. He wanted to set up a Constituent Assembly whose representatives, like the Sinn Feiners in 1922, confer with members of the British Government virtually as equals. The long inquest in London—three sessions at the Round Table, the tedious meetings of the Joint Parliamentary Select Committee, the White Paper, the involved Parliamentary debates, in which not a single member spoke for a following in India—was not his idea of what a Round Table Conference should have been.

Soon after his dinner with the Young Europeans Mr. Nehru was back in the United Provinces, in which his family live. He was anxious loyally to observe the Pact which he could not fully approve, and he realized that the truce between the Government and the Congress was political. He found, however, that the peasantry of the United Provinces could not pay their full rents. The catastrophic fall in prices hit them too hard. Substantial remissions were necessary. Anxious

## THE OPEN SEA

to separate the political from the economic issues, Mr. Nehru and fellow-Congressmen urged the peasants to pay what they could. Those payments were made. Yet the whole machinery of attachment was put into motion. The peasants gazed upon fields, bullocks and cows which had ceased legally to belong to them. The monsoon brought with it the tilling and the sowing seasons, and it was beyond the nature of the peasant—so submissive to the misfortunes of flood, famine and drought—to watch his land lie fallow. He tilled and he sowed. It was through no personal fault of his own that prices had lost their meaning while agents and zamindars still demanded their rents. Here was an evil to which the peasant refused to submit, and when supporters of the Government argued that the United Provinces were on the brink of an agrarian revolution they spoke the truth.

At another time the Government and the Congress might have worked in harmony. But the Government was reacting from the very personal leadership of Lord Irwin. Cabinet administration had been Lord Willingdon's aim when he was Governor of Madras. Now that he was in Simla he would trust the views of members of his Executive Council. The Indian Civil Service should reassert its authority and influence, and nothing annoyed the service more than the fact that the Congress was setting up a parallel Government. By what right did Mr. Nehru, a powerful member of the Congress Working Committee, presume to precipitate an agrarian revolution under the cover of a political truce? There is no doubt that a few members of the Indian Civil Service, a few zamindars and Mr. Nehru between them could have thrashed out a reasonable settlement and saved the peasant from what was undoubtedly a ruinous condition. But Dr. H. A. L.

## CONVICT

Fisher has written of the Great War "that it was fought between the most highly civilized peoples in Europe on an issue which a few level-headed men would easily have composed, and with respect to which ninety-nine per cent. of the population were wholly indifferent." The peasants of the United Provinces were far from indifferent, but the few level-headed men represented important interests. The prestige of the Indian Civil Service was in conflict with the prestige of the Indian National Congress. Neither was willing to give the other the victory. Civil disobedience was likely to recur, and with his incautious honesty Mr. Nehru declared that his countrymen must maintain "the war-mentality." He was marked for destruction, and as the *Pilsna* forged her way across the Arabian Sea, Mr. Gandhi learned that his chief lieutenant had been arrested. He was sentenced to two years' rigorous imprisonment.

None supposed that Jawaharlal Nehru would receive preferential treatment, and he certainly asked for none. There is a famous circular, dated June 30, 1932, in which the Inspector-General of Prisons "impressed upon Superintendents and gaol subordinates the fact that there is no justification for preferential treatment in favour of Civil Disobedience Movement prisoners as such. This class require to be kept in their places and dealt with grimly." Mr. Nehru was not permitted to doubt the grimness of these dealings. "The hardest of labour," he has written, "was given to our men in prison . . . and their lot was made as unbearable as possible in order to induce them to apologize and be released on an undertaking being given to Government. That was considered a great triumph for the gaol authorities. Most of these gaol punishments fell to the lot of boys and young men, who resented coercion and

humiliation. A fine and spirited lot of boys they were, full of self-respect and 'pép' and the spirit of adventure, the kind that in an English public school or university would have received every encouragement and praise. Here in India their youthful idealism and pride led them to fetters and solitary confinement. The lot of our womenfolk in prison was especially hard and painful to contemplate. They were worthy middle-class women, accustomed to a sheltered life, and suffering chiefly from the many repressions and customs produced by a society dominated to his own advantage, by man. . . . I was once lodged in a barrack next to a female enclosure, a wall separating us. In that enclosure there were, besides other convicts, some women political prisoners, including one who had been my hostess and in whose house I had once stayed. A high wall separated us, but it did not prevent me from listening in horror to the language and curses which our friends had to put up with from the women convict warders."

Two weary years dragged on, and a brilliant patriot moved from one gaol to another. Now and again efforts were made to alleviate the monotony. He was allowed a number of books to read and could have had more if he had chosen to read books on religion. Spengler's *Decline of the West* he could not read "because the title looked dangerous and seditious," and the inmates of Benares Gaol who in their folly asked to read the White Paper were told that political literature must be forbidden them. Mr. Nehru found time to write his Autobiography: it takes its place with Mr. Gandhi's Autobiography as one of the chief classics of the *satyagraha* movement.

And the two Autobiographies reveal the profound differences between the two men. Mr. Gandhi wrote



## CONVICT

his Autobiography after the Sessions Judge at Ahmedabad had sentenced him to six years' imprisonment. It ends with the significant events of 1922. Mr. Gandhi applied to the Indian struggle the weapon of *satyagraha* which he had found effective during the racial struggle between Asiatic and European. To those who have read the Autobiography all that has happened to Mr. Gandhi since 1922 seems to fit into the accepted pattern. There may be ordered development in his mind and character, but there are no unexpected changes. It is the same Mr. Gandhi who regained national leadership in 1929 and who is still dominating the thought of many of his lieutenants, though he spins and weaves in Wardha. His strange figure struts across an enormous stage, but the student is apt to conclude that Mr. Gandhi was at the height of his own powers in South Africa. The South African struggle was, perhaps, the purer manifestation of *satyagraha*, and there is a general impression that since his first incarceration in India Mr. Gandhi has made no further contributions to the politico-social doctrines of Gandhism. Mr. Nehru's Autobiography, on the other hand, is the work of a man whose mind and character are still developing. For him there is no comforting God. From his magnificent father he acquired a boyhood impression that religion is primarily a woman's affair. He experienced no urge for religion while he was at Cambridge. "I was superficial and did not go deep down into anything. And so the aesthetic side of life appealed to me, and the idea of going through life worthily, not indulging it in the vulgar way, but still making the most of it and living a full and many-sided life attracted me. I enjoyed life and I refused to see why I should consider it a thing of sin."

## THE OPEN SEA

It was, therefore, a shock when, in September, 1932, the aesthetic convict heard that in another gaol Mr. Gandhi was beginning a "fast unto death" in protest against the representation for the Untouchables, which the British Government's communal award allowed. How could an agnostic and a worldling permit such an appeal to religious sentiment, even though he knew that Mr. Gandhi has "a curious knack of doing the right thing at the right moment"? In desolation Mr. Nehru thought out his religious position, and again he refused to seek harbourage from doubt and uncertainty. "I prefer the open sea, with all its storms and tempests. Nor am I greatly interested in the after life, in what happens after death. I find the problems of this life sufficiently absorbing to fill my mind. The traditional Chinese outlook, fundamentally ethical and yet irreligious or tinged with religious scepticism, has an appeal for me, though in its application to life I may not agree. It is the *Tao*, the path to be followed and the way of life that interests me; how to understand life, not to reject it but to accept it, to conform to it and improve it. But the usual religious outlook does not concern itself with this world. It seems to me to be the enemy of clear thought, for it is based not only on the acceptance without demur of certain fixed and unalterable theories and dogmas, but also on sentiment and emotion and passion. It is far removed from what I consider spiritually and things of the spirit, and it deliberately or unconsciously shuts its eyes to reality lest reality may not fit in with preconceived notions. It is narrow and intolerant of other opinions and ideas; it is self-centred and egotistic, and it often allows itself to be exploited by self-seekers and opportunists."

There were many other convicts who, like Jawaharlal

## CONVICT

Nehru, preferred "the open sea." Birth and environment made them Mohammadans or Hindus, Sikhs or Parsis. And some adhered strictly to the faith in which they were born. A great number, however, were Mohammadans or Hindus, Sikhs or Parsis, in spite of themselves. They would allow neither God nor man to separate Indian from Indian. As they suffered side by side in the gaols they defied the familiar taunt that India is not yet a nation. There was no German nation during the 'Thirty Years' War, and less than a century ago statesmen were regarding Italy as the one area in Europe in which nationalism could never flourish: for Metternich Italy was merely "a geographical expression." Men and women went to prison to show that a new spirit was abroad in India. The figurehead of the movement might be a saint. The movement itself might be considered religious. But many of the chief sufferers were secular. They rebelled against all forms of exploitation, whether social or economic, racial or ecclesiastical. Like Jawaharlal Nehru, they were not "greatly interested in the after life, in what happens after death." The hope of paradise did not delude them. The happiness and joy which the world might give them was all that they cared to experience: and as they walked silently round the prison or submitted to the indignity of corporal punishment, they wondered often whether *satyagraha*—a method of attack feminine, masochistic and sentimental—could ever win *swaraj* for them. Youth passed to middle age. The happiness and joy came seldom. The body was worn with the coarse prison diet and the restriction of space; the mind was blunted by the lack of freedom and experimentation. The intellectuals were cattle whose movements a vigorous police impersonally controlled. There are young Indians in London and Paris who speak freely

## THE OPEN SEA

what is in their minds, who publish pamphlets and books and who assume that they have inherited the freedom of a Liberal Europe. But the shadows of a prison-house are lengthening over London and Paris. The intellectual in India failed to resist the mass imprisonments. The intellectual in Europe has not made good his freedom. He has cringed before temporal and ecclesiastical authority. He has not spoken the truth that is in him. He has not attempted to lead. He is terribly to blame. For the intellectual in India there lurks a future conditioned by prison walls and chastisement. That is a common fate for the intellectual in Germany, Austria, Yugoslavia, Greece and Italy. The intellectual of Spain lies buried beneath the debris of Madrid. The young men who walk leisurely to the British Museum or saunter down the Boulevard Saint-Michel, what chance have they of freedom if they escape the guns? The conscious mind mocks them with a sense of power. The world in which they live is cluttered with tabus; and money talks.

The social and political evils which surround the men who think or feel deeply Mr. Nehru attributes to violence. "Much in Soviet Russia I dislike—the ruthless suppression of all contrary opinion, the wholesale regimentation, the unnecessary violence (as I thought) in carrying out various policies. But there was no lack of violence and suppression in the capitalist world, and I realized more and more how the very basis and foundation of our acquisitive society and property was violence. Without violence it could not continue for many days. A measure of political liberty meant little indeed when the fear of starvation was always compelling the vast majority of people everywhere to submit to the will of the few, to the greater glory and advantage

## CONVICT

of the latter. Violence was common in both places, but the violence of the capitalist order seemed inherent in it; whilst the violence of Russia, bad though it was, aimed at a new order based on peace and co-operation and real freedom for the masses. With all her blunders, Soviet Russia had triumphed over enormous difficulties and taken great strides towards this new order." But if Communism was violent in Russia it shall not be violent in India. Mr. Nehru will dethrone the Princes, destroy the *bourgeoisie* and make the peasant, as Mr. Gandhi wished to make him, the final ruler of India's destinies. His task is not hopeless. Subjects may rise against their Princes. Tenants can stop the payment of their rents and bring the zamindars to ruin. The *bourgeoisie* of India has not the hardihood or the vigour of the *bourgeoisie* in France and England. The *panchayat* system of representation would rob the zamindars and the *bourgeoisie* of more than half their present influence. Members of the Legislative Assemblies, elected through the oblique *panchayat* system, would cheerfully eliminate the scourges of capitalism and private property. Revolution by consent would destroy the power of violence.

Such, in its simplest terms, is Mr. Nehru's creed of non-violence. He cannot give it a religious justification. The non-violence of an intellectual like Mr. Nehru is not the *satyagraha* of Mr. Gandhi, and despite the undoubted affection which Mr. Nehru has for Mr. Gandhi, it was not desirable that the man of religion and the man of intellect should march always together. Mr. Gandhi was understood by the people. The good man became the saint. The saint might have become the god. Indians corrupted the humanistic teaching of Gautama. There was no assurance that Mr. Gandhi's teachings would escape a like corruption,

## THE OPEN SEA

so that Gandhism, deprived of all spiritual energy, took its place with the heavy traditions which weigh down the heart and the mind of the wayfarer in India. From this fate Mr. Nehru's refreshing candour may have rescued it.

A life of suffering was not of Mr. Nehru's own choosing. He has never glorified suffering for its own sake. Redemption and purification—words frequently on the lips of Mr. Gandhi—gain no footing in Mr. Nehru's extensive vocabulary. A "vague kind of cyrenaicism" attracts him still. But the primrose path has led him to the white-washed walls of an Indian prison. Men whose reward is in heaven have died valiantly on the field of battle. There is no greater love than the sacrifice of the unbeliever. Mr. Nehru has made *satyagraha* come to terms with the realities of the twentieth-century world. There is a sense in which the present struggle between dictatorship and democracy is a final struggle between violence and non-violence. But democracy is not pure. Political democracy is harnessed to economic servitude. The City can turn out a Government and depose a King. It is in the Congress camp that *khaddar*-clad men and women will decide the issue whether non-violence shall prevail in a future world-order. Signor Mussolini realized the significance of Mahatma Gandhi. Herr Hitler may come to realize the significance of Mr. Nehru. It is not, perhaps, altogether a coincidence that Adolf Hitler and Jawaharlal Nehru were born in the same year.

## CHAPTER XXI

### ON THE EVE OF CHANGE

MR. NEHRU's leadership has not been easily secured. He has not made himself one with the Indian peasantry. Though he dresses simply, and even austere, in homespun garments, he could never wear a loin-cloth and a Kashmir shawl with the formal distinction of a military uniform, nor could he ever speak Hindi with the directness of Mr. Gandhi. He is not a God-commanded ascetic who has severely disciplined his diet, his dress and his tongue. His prose lacks the illuminating artlessness of Mr. Gandhi's. Faith alone can move mountains: the mountain which Mr. Gandhi removed was the barrier between the educated man and the peasant. The peasants found a leader calling to them, and they gladly responded. It is easy to argue that there are many districts in India where Mr. Gandhi's name is never heard, for he has worked in India for less than a quarter of a century. The wonder is that the "pathetic contentment" has been disturbed at all and that peasants—hundreds of thousands of them—look to the half-naked fakir for their redemption. He is trusted and he is loved. He will be a menace when he is no longer alive.

Mr. Nehru brings to the service of the peasant his intellect and his sympathies. He scorned the discomforts and the threats of imprisonment when he was defending the ejected tenants of the United Provinces. He can find no excuse for faulty systems of land tenure or for the *zamindari* system which the

## ON THE EVE OF CHANGE

contemporaries of Clive and Warren Hastings deliberately fostered. They will have no place in his Marxist paradise. So long as he is a Congress leader he will agree that the Congress shall meet annually in some rural district, so that peasants, looking up from their work in the hedge-less fields, may see the white-clothed statesmen of their country on the way to the Congress camp. Those statesmen may be no more intimate with the life of the soil than the young German in a labour corps who goose-steps with a spade slung over his shoulder. For the men whom Mr. Gandhi has trained in his Gujarati University are few in number. There is a dearth of *khaddar* minds for the *khaddar* civilization. Mr. Gandhi, in spite of himself, has chosen his lieutenants from the aristocracy and the *intelligentsia*. Homespun garments do not give Mr. Nehru a *khaddar* mind. Harrow and Cambridge, London, Paris and Vienna have meant too much for him. He is his father's son. His identification with the peasants has been hard to attain.

And, because hard to attain, Mr. Nehru is deeply conscious of the fact that the separation between educated and unlettered men is inhumane. He does not want the servile state. He abhors poverty. The religious compensations for poverty Mr. Nehru will not accept. Mr. Gandhi's praise of poverty he detests. The saint and the worldling dispute, and the arguments on both sides vex the ecclesiastic. Mr. Gandhi is a devout Hindu reforming the Hindu religion from within. He has denounced Untouchability because it is a corruption of the Hindu religion. He has persuaded many of his fellow-Hindus to open their temples to the Untouchables, because men have no right to set a barrier between the Untouchable and



## CONVICT

his God. He has not won his way without desperate conflict. The best Hindu minds eagerly support his movement for the redemption of the Harijans. But bad traditions can be tough, and spiritually-minded men are not always in advance of their times. The ecclesiastic lags behind the reformer. Hinduism—like Catholicism and Protestantism in Europe—does not willingly abandon a position which it has been holding, and the Hindu Mahasabha is Hinduism on the defensive. The Mahasabha fears the disintegrating forces around it. It fears the reformer and is ultra-montane. Mr. Gandhi preaches that the man who has reached the heart of his own religion has reached the heart of the other great religions also. He would make the Hindu work with the Mohammadan, the Confucian and the Christian for the good of mankind, more especially for the good of mankind in his own country. There were Mohammadans and Christians in the Sabarmati *ashram*. But this unity among adherents of different religions is as difficult for the orthodox Hindu as for the orthodox Christian to accept. Hinduism has many degraded and degrading manifestations. But in its highest and noblest forms, so Mr. Gandhi argues, it knows no rival. This protestation of the inherent purity of the Hindu religion the Mahasabha accepts with little confidence. Mr. Gandhi is a dangerous man.

With religion, since he has no religious pretensions, Mr. Nehru is not concerned. He is a humanist determined that his countrymen, whatever their religion or caste, shall possess security and an active peace of mind. His secularity explains his hatred of poverty. What he has seen in Russia, he remembers in India. Divisions between Asia and Russia are not sharp. A journey from Baku to Moscow is not unlike a journey

from Bombay to Delhi. There are the same sheepish crowds in the passing railway stations, where none seem to have work to do or to comprehend the demands of time. The human material with which Lenin and his lieutenants sought to create a Union of communistic States was not more promising than the human material to be found in India. Detestation of poverty implies that a peasant cannot be left to reap and sow, to spin and weave. Industry must be the ally of agriculture. The time has ended when India could export annually more than a million tons of wheat. The shrinkage of international trade and the pressure of population forbid the export.

But Indian trade is not without its advantage. India is the chief exporter of rice, tea and ground-nuts in the world. She has virtually a monopoly in raw jute and lac, and as an exporter of cotton she is second only to the United States. Neither industry nor trade bears any obvious relation to the welfare of the Indian peasant. His standards and his purchasing power have only to be slightly raised, and the world's trade will be substantially increased. A former Chancellor of the Exchequer once claimed that the peasant's purchasing power, raised by a farthing a day, would bring permanent prosperity to Great Britain. Unfortunately, Great Britain has not been able to alter India's status as a "price market," in which people buy goods for their cheapness and not for their quality. It has taken the Englishman too long to realize that the peasant, for all his poverty and suffering, is stronger than the prince. "The objects of Oriental traffic," Gibbon has said, "were splendid and trifling." The "riches of the East" were riches which the peasant did not see. Silks, porcelain and spices were the commodities which drove the Englishman to fight against the French and

## CONVICT

the Dutch. The English did not understand the market which more than three hundred million poor Indians could provide. The right understanding came from the Japanese, who have made a profound study of the Indian market and who accept the local conditions of sale. Their goods are so cheap that the Indian who has a few annas to spare can buy them. Men and women, who formerly walked bare-footed through the streets of Calcutta and Bombay, now wear Japanese shoes and Japanese socks. Without a doubt the cheap goods improve their health. Sunbathing is fit only for the well-fed.

Since 1913 there has been a marked decline in Great Britain's exports to India, while India's trade with Japan and the United States has been substantially increased. Very much depends upon the personal approach of the trader, and the American trader, who has been more successful than the English trader in China, is now determined to be more successful than the English trader in India, though even he can scarcely hope to oust the Japanese from a "price-market." Sustained boycotts against the English have been a very important factor in the decline of British trade. But the fundamental cause of the decline is geographical. The sea-route from London to Bombay is no more advantageous than the sea-route from San Francisco or Yokohama to Calcutta, and we are within measurable distance of the day when merchandise from India must travel to London by way of the Cape route. Japan believes it to be her destiny to capture the Indian market, and there are men who argue that the surrender of the Indian market might spare Great Britain her coming war in the Pacific. It is nevertheless a surrender which Great Britain cannot make. The right to surrender is vested in India's Government, which has

## ON THE EVE OF CHANGE

already experienced nearly two decades of fiscal autonomy. The commercial penetration of Japan might be peaceful, so long as British troops police the country. Cheap shirts and vests, cheap shoes and socks might bring unprecedented comforts to the Indian countryside. It is, however, certain that the rulers of India, whether English or Indian, will resist this penetration. Mr. Nehru will resist because articles whose cheapness is dependent upon the low standard of living in Japan are tainted at the source. India will strive for self-sufficiency. Before the separation of Burma, she was almost self-sufficing in her foodstuffs, except sugar. From Burma she acquires her mineral oil, timber and a large percentage of her rice. The separation will compel her always to maintain reciprocal trade agreements with Burma. Otherwise, it is behind high tariff walls that India's rulers will link *swadeshi* with *swaraj*.

And yet there is no assurance that the high tariff walls will secure prosperity for the labourer or the peasant. Every organizer of a trade union in India is an agitator and a fomenter of mischief. The railway workers and the workers in the textile industry are reasonably well organized. But an effective inspection of factories is prevented by the decision that a factory cannot be a factory unless it employs at least twenty persons. Thus factories for the making of carpets and cigarettes and also tanneries escape the doubtful vigilance of a Government inspector. Most of the conditions under which the factory hand works and lives beggar description. The terms on which the factory hand is employed make it virtually impossible for him to escape the money-lender, and in many parts of India it is still possible for a factory hand to pledge his children's labour in order to avoid the payment of

## CONVICT

his debts. The record of the Indian employer is no better than the record of the English employer whom he seeks to replace. There must be an active opinion exposing the follies and callousness of the exploiter, and modern India knows no better guardian than the Congress.

Mr. Gandhi accepts the division between capital and labour. He would unite the honest capitalist with the honest labourer. His ideas on economics are the ideas of John Ruskin, themselves a very great advance upon the theories and the practice of most of the Victorians. The Marxist ideology Mr. Gandhi leaves alone. It is because Mr. Nehru will not leave the Marxist ideology alone that some thousands of Congressmen are restive under his leadership. They may have gone to prison and suffered physical torment in the company of communistic intellectuals, but they rely upon their rents and their profits. The Marxist ideology is not for them. They are not certain, perhaps, what the ideal relations between capital and labour should be. But they will tolerate no instability in the currency or finance. They have not advanced far beyond the Liberals, who are content that an Indian *personnel* should replace the English *personnel* in the Government service and that the Central Government should be responsible to the Legislature. The capitalist and *bourgeois* elements within the Congress are asserting themselves. The Congress, in fact, cannot mitigate the coming struggle for economic power. It must take sides.

And the chances are that Mr. Nehru will be defeated. India is a conservative country. Suffering, imprisonment and boycott effect only a portion of the reforms and changes which men desire. The warm sun puts the strugglers to sleep. The mind

## ON THE EVE OF CHANGE

loses its adventure. Mr. Nehru would accomplish the Marxist revolution without violence. He would do what Karl Marx knew to be impossible. Power has to be seized. Many of the intellectuals are Communists, and their common terms of imprisonment have bred a reckless disregard for the consequences of their actions. The present system will not provide them with the function they were meant to fulfil. They have nothing to lose by revolution. Government servants are fond of warning the public that Russian money circulates in India and that dangerous and subversive societies exist. The country has its share of puppet Lenins, and perhaps in some obscure *bazar* men of superior ability are preparing their plans for a Communist State. Whatever those plans may be, they are not known to Jawaharlal Nehru. He is distrusted both by the revolutionary and the representative of the middle classes. It is a high price to pay for an unswerving devotion to the cause of non-violence.

But stronger than the suspicion of the revolutionary and the middle classes is the antipathy of the ecclesiastic. A Brahman may not believe in God. He can enjoy "a vague kind of cyrenaicism." He is not, however, permitted to preach emancipation to those who are not of his caste, or class. Mr. Nehru has set a shocking example. Mr. Gandhi identified the Congress with Hindu reform. Mr. Nehru has made it secular. He would undermine the old ecclesiastical authority by secular education. He advocates birth control. His is the modern mind, and in the perpetual struggle between the ancient India and the new it is not often that the new India gains a victory. Mr. Nehru has emerged from the ordeal of long imprisonment a changed man. He has ceased to be a dashing

## CONVICT

lieutenant. He speaks like a philosopher. His antipathy to the English rulers appears to be a little softened. But his knowledge of men and affairs is more assured. He understands the weaknesses of the men around him. They are betrayed by what is false within. Passions, lust and acquisitiveness are not easy to control, especially when the crusader makes war upon poverty, so that the tiller of the soil may enjoy the fruits of the earth. The way of the ascetic may be hard, but the way of the enlightened man of the world is harder. Devotion to fixed principles cannot obliterate the infinite complexities of modern life. Though Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Nehru will never forget the peasant and what they consider to be his needs, the peasant is not often remembered by the man in the cities. The danger that the peasant's *raj* shall become a *babu raj* is real, though the *panchayat* system of representation, which Mr. Gandhi advocated at the second session of the Round Table Conference, would have mitigated the danger. Mr. Gandhi knows that the peasantry in many districts will always follow him. Mr. Nehru is, perhaps, less certain. Whatever his robes and renunciations may have been, he is still patrician.

The Congress depends upon its members, and like most organizations and societies with a nation-wide membership, its influence is curbed by the standards of the hangers-on. It is not certain that the future will give to the Congress any leaders with the moral stature of Mr. Gandhi or the intellectual honesty and grasp of Mr. Nehru. The leaders of the future may fail not only to bridge the gulf between the educated and the unlettered, but also to work harmoniously for the industrial labourer as well as for the peasant. They may ignore the essential task of co-ordinating

## ON THE EVE OF CHANGE

agriculture with the other industries of India. They may allow their country to drift into the hopeless condition of a rural slum. Never was it more urgent that men of courage and men of vision should be at the helm in India. Bold policy alone can save the country from drifting into anarchy and the communal bloodshed which economic distress has often fostered.

But the Congress leaders' concern with the agricultural worker is symptomatic of a world-wide concern for the welfare of the masses. The Englishmen of the eighteenth century were not offended by the caste system in India. Untouchability did not shock them. They were more than ready to play the part of the white Brahmans. Sometimes they noted the agricultural poverty around them. But it did not often occur to them that the peasant was more unfortunate than the agricultural labourer in some of the English counties. Thomas Middleton, whose claim to be appointed the first Bishop of India depended upon his reputation as the greatest contemporary authority on the Greek aorist, never suspected that his haughty manner—he was the contemporary of Charles Lamb at Christ's Hospital—would offend the darker Brahmans. Even when Englishmen began to discuss the transference of their authority in India, they assumed that their successors would be Indian aristocrats. It was when they thought that the middle classes might gain political power that they spoke about the dumb masses. Their cause was lost from the moment that Mr. Gandhi succeeded in making the dumb masses follow his lead. Inevitably, the English record for education and social welfare in India is meagre compared with the record of less than twenty years of the Soviet régime in Russia or with the record of little more



## CONVICT

than ten years of Fascist regeneration in Italy. The Fascist and the Nazi must appeal to the masses. They cannot do it with flag-waving alone. They must pass from one achievement to another. Stagnation means death. The Congress leaders, when they are in power, must reform relentlessly. What they have achieved in the past, they have achieved in opposition. They were not the Government. Endless agitation can kill the creative ability. Signor Mussolini was once an agitator. So was Herr Hitler. Men predicted that their administration would soon end in revolt. But Europe may revolve round the axis of Rome and Berlin for some years to come. There is no inherent reason why the Congress, which is forming the new administration in some of the Provinces, should not govern with conspicuous success.

For provincial autonomy has curbed the central authority of the Congress Working Committee, just as it has limited the powers and influence of Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy. It has curbed the central authority, but it has made the regional influence of the Congress more effective than it was before. Hitherto, critics could argue that the strength of the Congress was not equal to its pretensions. There were districts in which the writ of the Congress did not run. The elections, for all their faults, revealed the Provinces in which the influence of the Congress was weak and in which it was strong. The unexpected strength of the Congress in at least six of the eleven Provinces introduces new elements into the political life of India. Regional government is more than necessary in India. Mr. Gandhi developed his ideas of the *khaddar* civilization and founded his University outside Ahmedabad because he thought that a Western-minded *intelligentsia* would never identify itself with

## ON THE EVE OF CHANGE

the peasantry: it would be too shallow for the *khaddar* leadership. There is a sense in which a central or federal government whose nation-building functions were not usurped by the Provinces would be too shallow in its aims to plant the seeds of political and social health. The Provinces have boundaries which often bear little relation to history or even to geography. The Mahratta world is broken into fragments. But the agitation provoked by George Curzon's decision to partition Bengal may have encouraged the constitution makers to avoid the re-making of boundaries. 'The Congress, like political India, is split up. It has nevertheless a chance to take—or to refuse—office. In some Provinces, perhaps, the Congress will refuse to take office, and the new reforms will encounter a heavy sea in the first few weeks of their career. In other Provinces the Congress leaders will probably take office. For there are many Congressmen who shun the constitutional agitation because there is work to be done and because the men who live in their own Province must be redeemed from their poverty before it is too late. The tasks that await the newly appointed Minister are, indeed, absorbing.



MINISTER



## CHAPTER XXII

### WAITING UPON EVENTS

THREE Englishmen drove into Saarbrücken a few days before the Nazi elections of March, 1936. They had come to see how the Saarlanders were faring now that a year had passed since their wealthy districts were incorporated into the Third Reich. They were not left alone by the new officials; nor did they wish to be left alone. They saw the new arterial roads, the vast air-port under construction, the new estates in which each house has its garden, its hen-run and pigsty, the youth hostels which remind the virile factory-worker that, like other Germans, he is a child of the forest. They saw the swastika, drooping on blood-red sheets from nearly every house. They knew that everywhere enthusiasm and energy were abounding, and they were therefore prepared for the discovery that the town of Saarbrücken had topped the polls throughout Germany. In the spring of 1935 a plebiscite had shown the world where lay the sympathies of the Saarlanders. The plebiscite was conducted with the strictest impartiality. The voting was secret and the tellers at the count were representatives of other nations. The British teller, in fact, was one of the three Englishmen who returned a year later to see how the Saarlanders were enjoying the régime which they had deliberately chosen for themselves. The methods of polling at the Nazi election, he found, differed not at all from the methods adopted at the plebiscite. The same polling stations were used and many of the ballot boxes still bore the

## MINISTER

broken seal of the League of Nations. The three Englishmen wandered from polling station to polling station. They were present at a midnight count, and they had no doubt concerning the secrecy of the ballot in Saarbrücken which gave more than ninety-nine per cent. of the votes to Herr Hitler and Herr Bürckel, the vigorous Gauleiter of the Saar and the Palatinate.

The Nazi success in the Saar attracted no undue attention in the English Press, which has not yet succeeded in commenting upon the Nazi revolution with detachment. So short is the public memory that Englishmen in the late spring of 1936 had forgotten the significance of the Saar valley to the politics of Western Europe. The French claim to the Saar nearly wrecked the Peace Conference. An apparently strong case was made for its annexation. Saarlouis was the birthplace of Marshal Ney and was likely, therefore, to be predominantly French in its sympathies. The settlement of 1814 gave the Saar district to the French, and it was through no fault of M. Clemenceau's generation that Napoleon's return from Elba wrecked the Settlement. Lorraine and the Saar have been economically interdependent. Nature has linked the iron-fields of Lorraine with the coal-fields of the Saar. Some of the larger coal-mines are partly in Lorraine and partly in the Saar. There is a coal-mine in the Saar which has its pit-head in Lorraine. So the French did not hesitate to argue that the Saar must come to them with Lorraine, and because Mr. Lloyd George and President Wilson refused to allow the annexation, which had never been set forth as one of the war aims of the Allies, and because French prestige would not permit an unconditioned surrender, it was eventually agreed that an untried League of Nations should administer the Saar district for a period of

## WAITING UPON EVENTS

fifteen years, while the French should occupy and work the mines. At the end of fifteen years the League of Nations should hold a plebiscite to decide whether the Saar should be incorporated with the Germany from which it was to be torn or with France, or whether the administration of the League of Nations should continue. The plebiscite, in fact, was to vindicate the right of self-determination.

For fifteen years the Saarlanders, intelligent and hard-working frontiersmen who were never perplexed by their own German sympathies, submitted to the edicts of an international, but alien, administration. They complained when a Frenchman was the High Commissioner, for he acted, they said, as though he were responsible to the Quai d'Orsay and not to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations. And when an Englishman succeeded the Frenchman, the Saarlanders still complained, for he was too formal and prone to consult the files. Energy and enterprise were held under the leash. Had France agreed to abandon the farce of applying self-determination to a German district unwillingly separated from the Fatherland, had the Saar been returned to Germany before the end of fifteen listless years, the preparation for a German dictatorship would have been less thorough. That France herself never doubted the German sympathies of the Saar was shown both by her profligate use of the mines and by the formation through Lorraine of the impressive Maginot line. The fortifications of Lorraine would have been different if the military or political leaders of France seriously believed that the Saar could be incorporated with their country.

From the moment that Herr Hitler's officers entered the Saar and took over the administration from the officials of the League of Nations a different spirit



## MINISTER

dominated the people. Under the League of Nations and its cautious, slow-moving and judicial administration, housing and the social services suffered from many disabilities. The chill tones of an alien administration discouraged initiative and risk. Under the new régime housing estates sprang up near the forests, and each estate had its school and consulting gardener. The new rulers were determined to clear up the districts which had become slums during the four years of war and the fifteen years of separation. They provided the slum-dweller with his house, his garden and pigsty, and although very much remains to be done, there is little doubt that more social improvements were effected between the plebiscite of 1935 and the Nazi election of 1936 than during any five years or more of the League administration.

Chafing so long from a detached and hesitant administration, the Saarlanders were more than eager for a régime which appointed certain officers and then made them responsible for getting things done with promptitude and thoroughness. They recorded their votes, both in 1935 and in 1936, with a full sense of responsibility. They understand the meaning and the menace of war. The boundary of Lorraine is less than three miles from the town of Saarbrücken. From the heights of Spicheren, where the French suffered their first defeat from the Prussians in August, 1870, can be seen almost all the steel works and factories of the Saar valley. Like most frontiersmen they have a grim sense of political realities. Yet they preferred the personal dictatorship of their fellow-Germans to a régime which had the moral support of more than fifty nations. There is no strong evidence that a second year of incorporation with the German Reich has weakened the Saarlanders' devotion to the Nazi dictatorship.

## WAITING UPON EVENTS

The Saarlanders' impatience with the League administration was not dissimilar to the Indian Congressman's impatience with the British *raj*. The Congressman does not dispute the honesty or the incorruptibility of the Indian Civil Servant, who consults his files, writes innumerable reports and carries out the orders of his superior officers, however distasteful he may find them. The Indian Civil Servant has perfected his machine. The administration is bound to be impaired when there are cranks at the head of affairs and blundering politicians, whose knowledge is limited and not specialized, who say the things which please the electors and, having said them, expect some outward show of fulfilment. Not in England alone are there Englishmen who believe that the policies of a country should be left to the Civil Servant. But just as a blundering and energetic German dictatorship is preferable to an international, and therefore alien, administration in the Saar, so a Congress administration, however experimental and untutored in ways of government, is better than an administration alien in its sympathies, aloof in its methods, and—like the League officials in the Saar—unwillingly discouraging initiative and risk among the administered.

"Self-government," Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman declared, "is better than good government." It was the last contribution to Liberal doctrine which a twentieth-century statesman succeeded in making. Mr. Asquith, though he was Prime Minister for eight years, contributed nothing to Liberal doctrine. But the belief that self-government is better than good government justifies Communism in Russia, Fascism in Italy and the Congress creed in India. The Nazi régime—for all the Teutonic absurdities about race, which rival the absurdities of Anglo-India, and the

## MINISTER

savage contempt for minority opinions—is a German régime triumphing over class-distinctions, overwhelming regional divisions and invading the barriers of modern nations until it reaches districts where the German language is not spoken and the German culture cannot flourish. The German Empire is not yet complete; but beyond the reach of the German language and the German culture, National Socialism cannot take root. Herr Hitler himself has admitted that National Socialism is not for export. The English Conservative who professes to discover a natural ally in National Socialism does not appreciate the urge to improve the lot of the people, to redeem the slum and the slum-dweller and to make one German the brother of another. Fascism in England would imply political reaction without social or economic redemption. It would not be English.

The Indian Congress may distress the English Liberal almost as much as National Socialism in Germany and Fascism in Italy. Its policy is seldom clear-cut. It adheres to Independence and yet sends delegates to a Conference already committed to a Federation that will not even possess a Dominion status. The Congress declares that it will not work the new reforms and yet urges all its followers to go to the polls. But a sense of reality and purpose governs the actions of its Working Committee. It seldom loses sight of fundamentals. It disciplines its members and is likely to show marked ability when it passes from its long career of tedious opposition to responsibility and office.

And Congress is as Indian as National Socialism is Germanic. The men dressed in *khaddar* who walk through the fields to the Congress camp understand the mind of India better than any alien administrator.

## WAITING UPON EVENTS

The English Liberal watches with dismay the eclipse and almost the disappearance of the Indian Liberals who were very much in evidence at the Round Table Conference. But it was Englishmen, not Indians, who selected the delegates to the Round Table Conference. The Indian Liberal acquired his political doctrines from England: and English Liberalism, like National Socialism, is not for export. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman implied as much when he said self-government is better than good government. It is because Indian political thought differs profoundly from the political thought of England that an alien administration can no longer be justified.

The long inquest is over. Nearly ten years have separated the appointment of the Simon Commission from the inauguration of provincial autonomy. The Federation is not yet formed and the King has postponed the Coronation Durbar until the late autumn of 1938. During the ten years energy has been dissipated and wasted. Talent has been frustrated and ignored. It remains to be seen whether the new provincial Governments will be marked by a great zeal for fundamental reforms. But whatever happens, the attention of the English public is likely to be listless. Men quickly forget the responsibilities they have been compelled to discard. For more than fourteen years the statesmen assembled in Geneva were forced to attend to reports from the Saar Commission. The Saar, in fact, was the chief "plague-spot" in Western Europe. But the Saarlanders have given their verdict. The League is no longer concerned with their welfare. What Herr Bürckel and his followers have done in the Saar since its incorporation with the Reich concerns few outside Nazi Germany. From Englishmen very little interest was to be expected. Even changes within

## MINISTER

their own Empire do not often perplex them. Hugging for long Arthur Balfour's delusion that the Irish were incapable of governing themselves, they have not cared to study the developments in the Irish Free State since Mr. de Valera, once their prisoner, became the President of the Dail Eireann. His repudiation of the King's authority within the Irish Free State the English regarded as one of the minor consequences of King Edward's abdication. They will certainly not trouble to compare the politics of a Province where the Congress is in office with a Province where the Congress is in strong or weak opposition.

Nor is England's concern for the political turmoil on the Continent profound. While the Saarlanders were going to the polls on the last Sunday of March, 1936, French troops were mobilized in Lorraine. They swarmed through Sarreguemines and Bitche and marched through the medieval streets of Wissembourg. Their guns were trained upon the factories of Saarbrücken and the new houses which rose from the forest clearings. The small garrison which was sent to Saarbrücken in defiance of the Treaty of Versailles consisted of many recruits who goose-stepped valiantly at the head of a torchlight procession, but who would have received, together with all other troops in the Rhineland, the order to retire from the moment that the French began their march into the so-called demilitarized zone. France built up a system of hegemony in Europe which bore little relation to geographical factors. Her alliances in Eastern Europe, into which her troops cannot enter, depended upon the assumption that once Germany defied the territorial clauses of the Treaty of Versailles, French troops would march into the Rhineland. On March 7, 1936—the most decisive date in European history since

## WAITING UPON EVENTS

November 11, 1918—it was the German troops who marched into the Rhineland. The French troops were in Lorraine, guarding the roads, building trenches and stretching wire entanglements across the countryside. But they did not march into the Rhineland. Eastern Europe has not forgotten. The countries make their choice between the patronage of Germany or Russia. Geography has triumphed over diplomacy.

And perhaps geography was in conspiracy with the world order when Signor Mussolini decided to invade Ethiopia. As French hegemony ceased to be justified once France failed to take up the challenge in the demilitarized zone, so the League of Nations lost its vitality once its members failed to eject the invader of Ethiopia. Mr. Baldwin went to the polls on the strength of his League of Nations policy, and India, never before enthusiastic for the League of Nations, was willing to take her share in the ejection of the Italians. Adowa has helped the Indian people to regain their self-respect. It encouraged them to anticipate home rule—an encouragement which the Japanese defeat of Russia was subsequently to fan into flame. The war helped to destroy any lingering belief in the unqualified superiority of the European civilization, for the war of European against European seemed to be as treacherous as the clash between Mohammadan and Hindu, which every educated Indian professes to detest. Later there came the Japanese penetration into Manchuria, and Indians realized that imperialist adventure was not exclusively an European characteristic. They found that the League of Nations was not prepared to apply economic or military sanctions against Japan and, indeed, those who argued that the League members had not the machinery at their disposal to curb the ambitions of Japan seemed to present a very strong case.

## MINISTER

The position of the League of Nations, when Signor Mussolini began the invasion of Ethiopia in October, 1935, was completely changed. The League members had all the cards. Italy was desperate and almost bankrupt. Her fighting forces were marshalled in Eritrea. France and England had only to close the Suez Canal, the countries which possessed oil fields had only to stop supplies to Italy and rigorously to enforce economic sanctions, and Signor Mussolini would have been humbled. He would have been humbled, but the skilful planner might have turned into a desperate gambler and made war upon Great Britain; or, humbled and defeated, he would have met the dictator's end, and many people in England would sooner see Ethiopia become Italian than Italy become communistic. Imperial aims and economic ideology do not correspond. For India supported economic sanctions against Italy. She would have supported a League War and regained some of Mr. Gandhi's belief in the liberating qualities of the British Empire. Once the nations brought the Italian enterprise to an end, whether or not its end had been attained through a League War, they could have agreed to stabilize the *status quo* and to set forth a world-order which had behind it the sanctions of law. Stability would not mean a world-order which could not be changed, but all alterations in the *status quo* would be achieved through international consent. The League of Nations, so far from perpetuating the *status quo*, might have become the chief agency for promoting a more permanent, because more flexible, world-order. But what chances there were of stabilizing the *status quo* vanished as the Italians advanced towards Addis Ababa and the French declined to eject the German troops from the Rhineland.

## WAITING UPON EVENTS

So Herr Hitler proceeds to create a Reich which is to be self-sufficing and which shall in time include all the German-speaking people, whether they be Austrian, Swiss or Greek. Signor Mussolini proceeds to make of the Mediterranean an Italian lake. Already he has transformed the Suez Canal into a highway to two great Empires, instead of one. His Mediterranean ambitions are made to justify his participation in the miscalled Spanish Civil War. Fortifications and airports on the Balearic Islands, whether or not they remain Spanish territory, will menace the Rock of Gibraltar, whose strategic value was more admired in the eighteenth century than in the twentieth. Within a year of the Italian occupation of Addis Ababa, Signor Mussolini has come very much nearer to making the Suez Canal the exclusive link between an Italian Lake and an Italian Empire. Libya and Italian East Africa threaten and may soon devour Egypt and the Sudan. Geography favours both Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini.

Great Britain, realizing her danger, entered into negotiation with Egypt. High Commissioner after High Commissioner had failed to reconcile Egyptian demands with British policy. Egypt sought the status of honourable independence; but British troops remained garrisoned in the capital city, though there was no reason why, at any time since the Armistice, they should not have been withdrawn from Cairo and stationed on the banks of the Suez Canal. It was not until Italian troops were preparing to hold Egypt and the Sudan within the military pincers of Libya and Italian East Africa that the British decided to be accommodating. They signed with Egypt a Treaty which might have been arranged ten or fifteen years beforehand. The Treaty was solemnly signed in the Locarno Room at the Foreign Office. There followed



## MINISTER

banquets and laudatory speeches. But in India the significance of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty was not overlooked. Britain's peril had been Egypt's opportunity. Britain's peril must be also India's opportunity. The one chance of making war with India's support was lost after the occupation of Addis Ababa. Never again will India support Great Britain's wars in the hope that a grateful Power will grant her freedom or independence. Like Mr. de Valera, mentor of many prominent Congressmen, the future leaders of India will profit from Great Britain's discomfiture.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### EMERGENCE OF A NEW ORDER

THE military occupation of the Rhineland, the creation of the Empire of Italian East Africa, and the Spanish Civil War proclaim the dissolution of the post-war order and the preparation for a new order in the West. The ships which voyage from London to Bombay sail through seas where Naval Powers are anticipating action. Great Britain is arming steadily, and under the cover of a Royal wedding, a Jubilee and a Coronation, her people have forgotten that re-armament is no compensation for the loss of international trade. Her Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs replied to Herr Hitler's peace offer immediately after the last Nazi elections with a chill questionnaire. The Foreign Office seeks detachment, while the industrialists manufacture guns and aeroplanes and recall with marked satisfaction the prosperity of 1936. The need for cannon-fodder has provoked the belated "physical fitness" campaign. British youths get their bodies into trim, while British statesmen at the seventeenth League Assembly deliberately avoided giving any lead, and the Aga Khan, speaking in a hall that was more than half-empty, did not mention his country's distress over the failure of sanctions against Italy. British statesmen are waiting until their guns and their cannon-fodder are ready, and then they will take the action which, they believe, will avoid the second Great War. It is a snare. The Berlin-Rome axis will be keeping Great Britain still on the defensive.

## MINISTER

For nations which are geographically compact soon recover from their defeat in war. France recovered speedily after her war with Prussia. The German people are no less united to-day than they were in 1914. In a war between the Central Powers and the so-called democracies it is probable that the democracies would win. But in the process they would lose almost a complete generation of young men. Their capitalist society would break under the strain, and within twenty years of the peace, wherever dictated, the Central Powers would be strong again. Germany and Italy are the modern nations of Europe. They can endure defeat, lie stricken for a decade or longer and regain their strength. Is it to be England's destiny to shed a million of her sons once every twenty years until the spoils of victory go at last to the Central Powers, making the German-speaking people a single nation, the tough backbone of Europe, and giving to Italy her sway in the Mediterranean? There should be a decisive answer to that question. But the chill questionnaire to Herr Hitler's peace offer showed the British diplomats were treading the path they had trod before Germany or Italy became nations.

Of necessity the emergence of a new world-order will profoundly affect the destinies of the British Empire. The foreign policy of Great Britain is not the foreign policy of the Dominions, nor have the Dominions a foreign policy common to themselves. The economic influence of the United States over Canada grows stronger, and the temptations to identify Canada with the new neutrality of the New World in the next European War are likely to be overwhelming. In any event Canada's foreign policy cannot be fundamentally at variance with the foreign policy of the United States. Harmony between the people who

## EMERGENCE OF A NEW ORDER

live on both sides of the long undefended frontier is of greater importance to Canada than the show of a united Empire front whenever British statesmanship encounters a storm. Chanak has a lesson for posterity.

South Africa and New Zealand were foremost in the application of safeguards against Italy. They saw the consequences of Italian success to the fortunes of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and it was due chiefly to the advocacy of Mr. W. L. Jordan, High Commissioner for New Zealand in London, that the Ethiopian delegates were permitted to retain their seats at the seventeenth League Assembly. South Africa, New Zealand and Australia are, in fact, drawn together by a common fear of Japanese designs. They know that until the Singapore base is completed the High Fleet cannot operate in the Pacific, and the ease with which Signor Mussolini accomplished the conquest of Ethiopia suggests that the Fleet may not sail beyond Alexandria. South Africa, New Zealand and Australia will almost certainly combine to create an effective air arm. Great Britain is too remote for their reliance. In the coming Pacific struggle the United States may find herself involved, together with Canada. Victoria and Vancouver are no less alive to the danger than Seattle and San Francisco, but Ottawa and Washington look eastwards rather than westwards, and the mobilization of opinion in vast countries is not easy.

What then is the true attitude of India? She had reasons of her own for wishing to defend the honours gained at Adowa. She knew that Signor Mussolini's mission was as imperialist as Napier's expedition to Magdala, the cost of which is one of the items of her swollen public debt. Every argument used against Signor Mussolini's venture was an argument against the British *raj*, and when Signor Mussolini succeeded

## MINISTER

in his defiance of the League, India swiftly realized that, with all the defences of collective security broken, the Japanese menace assumed greater proportions. India has no love for Japan. Her industrialists fear the Japanese rivals and, despite the need of labourers and peasants for the cheapest goods, will endeavour to erect tariff barriers against them. But while she detests the Japanese intrusion into China, she cannot be expected to sympathize with the determination of Australia and New Zealand to exclude the coloured immigrants. India, like Japan, has people to spare for colonization. Indians are resident throughout South Africa, Kenya, and, until the Italian invasion, in Ethiopia. It is evident to Indians and Japanese alike that the uncoloured Australians will never completely colonize their own continent. The exclusion of the Asiatic from Australia could be justified—if at all—only by a bold policy of immigration. Twenty-five million Australians might hold their own against the marauding Japanese. England, however, has almost ceased to provide Australia with the immigrants which she needs. The English population is about to decrease. Within a few decades the English statesmen, like Mr. de Valera before them in Dublin, may attempt a policy of economic and national self-sufficiency. The paradise of the Little Englander will be accomplished nearly a century after the doctrines of the Little Englander were ceasing to be fashionable. A country which has a decreasing population is scarcely one fitted to maintain an Empire. Nature is playing her part in the decline of the British supremacy.

Yet the emergence of the Little England need not mean the complete disappearance of what is now the British Commonwealth of Nations. Hitherto the King has been the link between the Mother Country and

## EMERGENCE OF A NEW ORDER

the Dominions, and it was assumed that without the monarchy the Empire could not hold together. This theory Mr. de Valera has effectively weakened. Other Dominions are free to follow the example of the Irish Free State and repudiate the King's internal authority. The way is prepared for the membership of separate republics within the Commonwealth of Nations, and if there can be separate republics, why should there not be also separate monarchies? If the privilege of membership can be accorded to Indians, should they be denied to the monarchical Scandinavians? There is no visible head of the League of Nations, and it is not imperative that there should be a visible head of a Commonwealth of Nations established for the policing of peace in certain areas of the world. Monarchical England and republican Ireland have certain interests in common with monarchical Canada and the republican United States, and it is on the Ottawa-Washington axis that the destinies of the English-speaking people should revolve. As the population of Canada increases and the population of Great Britain declines, the centre of the Empire will shift to Ottawa. The days of London as the imperial capital are numbered. Until the capital is transferred, Great Britain will continue to be the weakest link in the imperial chain. Geography dictates the political supremacy of Canada if the British Commonwealth of Nations is to function in the emerging world-order.

Once the character of the Commonwealth of Nations is changed, Englishmen may discard the imperialist armour which they have worn fitfully since they lost the American colonies. They may wish to limit their liabilities and so prepare themselves philosophically for the loss of India, as they prepared themselves philosophically for Mr. de Valera's experiments.

## MINISTER

India may thus receive the Independence for which the Congressmen are clamouring. It will be a difficult prize for the Congressmen to keep. They will inherit a contentious North-West Frontier policy and find themselves compelled, like the English in 1914, to produce an efficient, though hurriedly trained, officer. Inheriting this policy, intensified by Britain's traditional distrust of Russia, the new Indian Government would not have the financial means to develop an effective Navy. Whether it was a Dominion or an independent country, it would shelter behind the base at Singapore.

But what we have, we hold. We are arming. We are recruiting. We denounce the pacifists. We will not let down the Australian, the New Zealander, the South African. We will not surrender any more mandated countries. Palestine is virtually ours, and the Cypriots who talk of Greece forget the importance of Cyprus for Britain's imperial communications. We cannot return to Germany her lost colonies, for although the return of those colonies would dissipate her pent-up energy and by increasing her commitments undermine her eagerness for war, Britain would lose substantial territory. To the return of the German colonies the Conservatives will not consent. The dwindling race of Englishmen clings to territory it cannot hope to develop. The Central Powers may do the sabre-rattling, but posterity will not acquit Britain of her responsibility for the next Great War.

We are arming not only the nation, but the mind. The Church, which supported the last Great War, will assuredly support the next. The pacifists will make no headway. Not even Mr. Gandhi would apply *satyagraha* on a Western front. The peace-makers will be not the young men who declare that

## EMERGENCE OF A NEW ORDER

in no circumstance will they fight for King and Country, but the men who can compel a Government to change its policy and to recognize that the lamentable failure of collective security for which—given the right will and determination—success could have been certain, involves innumerable sacrifices and concessions. Unless they are made, a second Great War is a foregone conclusion. The disarmament of the mind, however, will not be permitted. The intellectual who works for peace will be suspect. India has taught the English governing classes how to control the police state. Men with successful careers in the Indian police gain important positions in England. They do not pretend to have any sympathy with democracy or with freedom of speech. The influence of the intellectual is easy to curb. Dangerous views can be put to silence. The intellectual life of India was once completely broken when many thousands of men and women were committed to prison in the interest of "Repression and Reform." And yet the next war, like the last, will be "fought between the most highly civilized peoples in Europe on an issue which a few level-headed men would easily have composed, and with respect to which ninety-nine per cent. of the population was wholly indifferent."

It is the Empire's association with war which makes India reluctant to take her place as a self-governing Dominion. Her finances were used for the three Afghan Wars, for Napier's excursion to Magdala and for the wars against Burma. She is charged with heavy commitments in the Great War. Within her territory are stationed troops who, she argues, are being trained at her expense for emergency service in other parts of the Empire. She will breathe freely again, she believes, when the British domination has



## MINISTER

come to an end. The British domination, however, has become part of her history and some of its traditions will not be easily eradicated. There remains the Anglo-Indian community. It numbers not many more than one hundred thousand. But the "half-caste" has had his influence upon history. There was nothing strange in the Roman's love for Cleopatra. Some of the younger Anglo-Indians, well endowed in mind and body, are bound to play a useful part in national or provincial affairs. There are Americans and Canadians in the employment of the Chinese Government who look upon China as their second country, and there are Englishmen whose love for India makes them anxious to work for her. They have administrative ability, and some of them will not leave the country because they have ceased to be members of the governing class or because India has severed her connection with the British Commonwealth of Nations.

But India is not a *tabula rasa* on which Englishman or Congressman can write what he will. She is an ancient country. Her enmities are deep. Her history challenges the reformer at every step. She is as wilful and obstinate as Europe. Holiness and cruelty go hand in hand. Old confederacies reassert themselves. The Bengali and the Punjabi follow separate traditions of nationhood. The Mahratta spirit breaks through the bonds which the Presidency of Bombay, the Central Provinces and the Nizam of Hyderabad's Dominions endeavour to impose. The day when India becomes fully national in her consciousness may still be remote, and fissiparous factors are operating at a time when India needs a show of unity. The reformers know the powers of reaction and the anathemas of the priestly caste. Yet men, both

## EMERGENCE OF A NEW ORDER

within the Congress and in other societies, are working whole-heartedly for the redemption of their countrymen. Viceroys and Governors drive to Church. Princes ride out to the polo-ground. The Englishman plays bridge in his club. And the patient peasant sows and reaps. One conqueror after another has swept over his paddy fields. The peasant alone endures. It will be worth all the trials and tribulations of a noble land if his becomes the voice which dictates the policies and the peace of India.



## GLOSSARY

Ashram	Community house of religious or social workers.
Babu	Clerk
Bania	Member of a trading community. More particularly, a moneylender.
Bazar	Shopping mart
Chota peg	Small measure. More or less a small whisky, and thus a Scotch one, which belongs to the English rather than an Indian language.
Fakir	Religious ascetic
Hartal	Community display of mourning
Khaddar	Homespun
Lathi	Stick, leaded at one end and affected by the police
Maidan	Park or open space
Munshi	Language instructor
Panchayat	Representative institution
Raj	Rule
Saheb or Sahib	Lord. Caste word long Englishmen
Sanad	An agreement or session
Satyagraha	Satya is truth. The word has firmness. The word was coined by Gandhi to signify "Soul Force," his substitute for violence

Swadeshi

Swaraj

Sannyasi

Vakil

Zamindar

## GLOSSARY

Economic self-sufficiency

Home Rule

Religious contemplative or mystic

Lawyer

Landlord

# INDEX

- Abdul Hamid, Sultan, 151  
 Aberdeen, Lord, 73  
 Abu Bakr, Caliph, 96  
 Abu, Mount, 116  
 Abu Road, 117  
 'Addis Ababa, 156, 197, 224, 276-278  
 Aden, 33, 65, 222  
 Adowa, 156, 275, 281  
 Afghanistan, 3, 137  
 Aga Khan, the, 147, 149-155, 158, 159, 176, 279  
 Ahmedabad, 115, 187, 188, 234, 246, 262  
 Akbar, Emperor, 126  
 Alexandria, 281  
 Ali, Hyder, 82, 83, 97  
 Ali, Mohammad, 14, 15, 23  
 Ali, Shaukat, 14, 15, 23  
 Aligarh University, 150, 151  
 Allahabad, 168, 175, 239  
 Amsterdam, 194  
 Anantpur, 98  
 Animanda, 208  
 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, the, 277, 278  
 Ansari, M. A., 176  
 Aquinas, St. Thomas, 7  
 Arcot, 97, 117  
 Asaf Jah, Nizam, 96-99, 105, 115  
 Assam, 232  
 Astor, Lady, 220  
 Ataturk, Kemal, 18, 19, 228  
 Aurangzeb, Emperor, 96  
     ralia, 281, 282  
     ria, 249  
 Aurangzeb Shah, Emperor, 136, 224  
 A. W. 1, 254  
 A. W. 1, Stanley, 25, 26, 31, 40, 51, 52, 65, 141, 161, 275  
 Balfour, Lord, 28, 29, 73, 274  
 Ballary, 98  
 Balmoral, 196  
 Bangalore, 91  
 Baptista, Joseph, 9  
 Bardoli, 16  
 Baring-Gould, Sabin, 68  
 Baroda, 106, 119, 121, 131  
 Baroda, Maharajah Gaekwar of, 114, 115, 118, 132, 152, 158  
 Basra, 4  
 Beaverbrook, Lord, 220  
 Benares, 245  
 Bengal, 60, 61, 117, 118, 122, 132-134, 155, 160, 184, 286  
 Benn, Wedgwood, 39, 42, 52, 173  
 Benthall, Sir Edward, 62  
 Bentinck, Lord William, 10  
 Berar, 98-106, 112, 127, 129, 130, 155  
 Berar, Prince of, 107, 151  
 Berlin, 239, 279  
 Besant, Mrs. Annie, 6  
 Bhawnagar, 124  
 Bikanir, 113  
 Bikanir, Maharajah of, 55, 108-117, 120, 122, 169, 171  
 Birkenhead, Lord, 31-33, 35, 39, 161, 168, 169  
 Bitche, 274  
 Blackett, Sir Basil, 21, 23, 199  
 Bobbili, 97  
 Bobbili, Rajah of, 232  
 Bombay, City of, 3, 22, 33, 34, 47, 48, 51, 54, 57-60, 65, 66, 109, 110, 112, 115-117, 120, 125, 139, 140, 154, 155, 181, 183, 191-193, 199, 203, 209, 240, 255, 256, 279, 286  
 Bombay, Presidency of, 131, 132, 134

## INDEX

- Bonar Law, Andrew, 161  
 Booth, William, 223  
 Botha, General, 212  
 Brassey, Lord, 54  
 Bray, Sir Denys, 159  
 Brayne, F. L., 198  
 Burckel, Herr, 268, 273  
 Burke, Edmund, 5  
 Burma, 140, 156, 201, 224, 232, 237, 257, 285  
 Bussy, B. M., 97, 197  
 Byculla Club, 203  
 Byng, Lord, 56  
  
 Caesar, Julius, 80  
 Cairo, 277  
 Calcutta, 22, 33, 34, 101, 138, 139, 154, 185, 191, 199, 256  
 Caliphate, 4, 15, 19, 20, 30, 102-104, 143, 151, 152  
 Cambridge, 239, 242, 246, 253  
 Campbell-Bannerman, Sir Henry, 271, 273  
 Canada, 280, 281, 283  
 Canterbury, Archbishop of, 55, 64, 174, 220  
 Carlton Club, 26  
 Carnatic, the, 98, 184  
 Casement, Roger, 11  
 Castlerosse, Lord, 220  
 Catherine of Braganza, Queen, 240  
 Central Provinces and Berar, 107, 129, 133, 234, 286  
 Chamberlain, Sir Austen, 4  
 Chamberlain, Joseph, 209-211, 221, 223  
 Chamberlain, Neville, 174  
 Chaplin, Charles, 220  
 Chari, Sir Krishnama, 115, 158  
 Charlotte, Princess, 71  
 Charnock, Job, 9, 185  
 Chauri-Chaura, 16, 216-218  
 Chelmsford, Lord, 6, 12  
 Chelmsford Club, the, 30, 31  
 Cheltenham, 196  
 China, 3, 187, 282, 286  
 Churchill, Randolph, 220  
 Churchill, Winston, 49, 65, 220  
 Circars, Northern, 98  
  
 Clemenceau, Georges, 156, 268  
 Clive, Lord, 97, 253  
 Coleman, Dr., 87, 88  
 Comorin, Cape, 33  
 Condorcet, Antoine Nicholas, 5  
 Cosgrave, W., 219  
 Cuddapah, 97  
 Curzon, Lady, 141  
 Curzon, Lord, 13, 17-23, 27, 33, 53, 67, 68, 70, 72, 73, 82, 87, 101, 104, 118, 132, 136, 138, 141, 142, 263  
 Cyprus, 33, 284  
  
 Dalhousie, Lord, 194  
 Dandi, 170  
 Das, C. R., 34  
 David, Sir Sassoon, 3, 4, 8-10, 12, 203  
 Delhi and New Delhi, 22, 30, 48, 49, 58, 59, 62, 65, 89, 92, 95, 96, 112, 119, 127, 134, 137-141, 149, 154, 156, 162, 169, 172, 174, 193, 199, 239, 255  
 Delhi Pact, 50, 58, 110, 219  
 Deolali, 190  
 Dharbanga, Maharajah of, 232  
 Diderot, Denis, 5  
 Disraeli, Benjamin, 11, 110, 137, 207  
 Dorset, 154  
 Doumer, Paul, 195, 197  
 Draper, Mrs. Eliza, 149  
 Dublin, 282  
 Dudley, Lord, 73  
 Duncan, Jonathan, 131  
 Dupleix, J., 97, 197  
 Durban, 209  
 Durrani dynasty, 155  
 Dutch East Indies, 195, 196  
 Dyer, General, 7  
  
 East India Company, 100, 186, 194  
 Eden, Anthony, 147, 279  
 Edinburgh, 29, 185  
 Edward the Seventh, King, 36, 68, 71, 136, 137, 140  
 Edward the Eighth, King, 79, 80, 140, 141, 216

## INDEX

- Egerton, Sir Brian, 117  
 Egypt, 277  
 Elizabeth, Queen, 71, 72, 184  
 Ethiopia, 3, 147, 156, 157, 223-225, 275-277, 281, 282  
 Ethiopian, Emperor of, 45, 156, 158, 224  
 European Association, 202  
  
 Fatima, 147  
 Fisher, Dr. H. A. L., 243, 244  
 Fitzalan, Lord, 73  
 France, 269, 275, 276, 280  
 Fraser, Sir Stuart, 86  
 Fulham, Bishop of, 208  
  
 Gallieni, General, 195  
 Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand, 6, 14-16, 19, 20, 23, 30, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42-46, 48-50, 58-63, 88, 90, 108, 115, 121, 124, 125, 130, 140, 158, 169, 170, 173, 188, 193, 204, 207-241, 244-262, 276, 284  
 Gautama the Buddha, 250  
 Geneva, 111, 147, 153, 156-159, 224, 273  
 George the Third, King, 33, 71, 72, 102  
 George the Fourth, King, 71  
 George the Fifth, King, 11, 28, 36, 45, 65, 89, 110-113, 138-141  
 George the Sixth, King, 273  
 Germany, 248, 249, 267, 269, 272, 275, 280, 284  
 Ghorî, Mohammad, 15  
 Gibbon, Edward, 255  
 Gibraltar, 33, 277  
 Gidney, Sir Henry, 189  
 Giornale d'Italia, 221-223  
 Gladstone, William Ewart, 8, 9, 110, 111, 137, 139, 208  
 Gloucester, Duke of, 44, 45, 156  
 Goa, 208  
 Gordon, General, 8  
 Greece, 18, 249, 284  
 Grey, Lord, 26, 27, 50  
 Gujerat, 115, 132  
 Gulab Singh, 126, 128, 129  
 Gwalior, Maharajah of, 117  
 Hailey, Lord, 198  
 Haksar, Sir K. N., 125, 162  
 Halifax, 1st Viscount, 25  
 Halifax, 2nd Viscount, 26, 27  
 Halifax, 3rd Viscount, 20, 25, 27, 30-61, 70, 95, 106, 108, 147, 169, 173, 212, 219, 235, 239, 241, 243  
 Hardinge, Lord, 44, 139  
 Harrow School, 239, 242, 253  
 Hasan, Mohammad, 147, 155  
 Hastings, Warren, 9, 49, 185, 195, 196, 198, 200, 253  
 Hemchandra Narayan, 207-209, 213  
 Heutsz, General van, 194, 197  
 Hindu Mahasabha, 254  
 Hitler, Adolf, 147, 251, 262, 268, 269, 272, 277, 279, 280  
 Hoare, Sir Samuel, 52, 64, 92, 170, 171, 173, 222, 233  
 Hyderabad, City of, 95, 99, 104, 105, 118, 127, 151  
 Hyderabad, Contingent of, 100, 101  
 Hyderabad, Nizams of, 23, 74, 83, 89-121, 127-130, 142, 151, 155, 166  
 Hyderabad, State of, 97-107, 114, 121, 127-134, 149, 159, 286  
 Hydari, Sir Akbar, 104  
  
 Ilbert Bill, 8  
 Impey, Sir Elijah, 9  
 Indian Civil Service, 44, 177, 186, 199-202, 243, 244, 271  
 Indo-China, 185  
 Indore, 120  
 Indore, former Maharajah of, 117, 123, 134  
 Iran, 148, 149, 158  
 Irish Free State, 142, 143, 160, 164, 274, 283  
 Irish Treaty, 46  
 Irwin, Lord (see Halifax, 3rd Viscount)  
 Ismail, Sir Mirza, 86, 89, 92, 93  
 Italy, 248, 249, 271, 272, 276, 279, 280  
 Italy, King of, 157



## INDEX

- Jaffa Sadik, 147  
 Jaipar, 97  
 Jaipur, Maharajah of, 117  
 Jallianwala Bagh, 14, 164  
 James, William, 215, 219  
 James the Second, King, 70  
 Jang, Sir Salar, 100, 101  
 Japan, 157, 240, 256, 257, 275, 281, 282  
 Java, 194, 195, 197  
 Jibuti, 45  
 Jodhpur, 117  
 Jones, Sir William, 9, 185  
 Jordan, W. L., 281  
  
 Kapurtthala, Maharajah of, 117  
 Karachi, 120  
 Karnal, 97, 98  
 Kashmir, 125-129, 133, 159  
 Kashmir, Maharajah of, 111, 117, 126, 162, 163  
 Kathiawar, 121-125, 131, 134  
 Kemel, Mustapha (see Atatürk)  
 Kenya, 20, 282  
 Khandesh, West, 122  
 Kitchener, Lord, 101  
 Kolhapur, Maharajah of, 55, 131  
 Kraemer, Dr. H., 194  
  
 Lamb, Charles, 261  
 Lancashire, 197, 220  
 Lausanne, 153  
 Lawrence, Henry, 198  
 Lawrence, John, 69, 85, 198  
 League of Nations, 111, 147, 156, 157, 224, 268-276, 281-283  
 Lenin, N., 259  
 Lewis, Sir George Cornwall, 185  
 Libya, 277  
 Linlithgow, Lord, 28, 29, 64-71, 106, 130, 142, 204, 262  
 Litvinoff, M., 147  
 Lloyd, Lord, 16  
 Lloyd George, D., 18, 19, 161, 268  
 Lorraine, 268, 269, 274, 275  
 Lothian, Lord, 220  
 Lyautey, Marshal, 195, 197  
 Lytton, Lord, 8, 137  
  
 Macaulay, Lord, 10, 185, 226, 227  
 MacDonald, J. Ramsay, 39, 42, 51-53, 57, 59, 132, 161, 172, 173, 176, 212  
 MacDonald, Malcolm, 147  
 McNeill, J., 72  
 Madras, 57, 97, 133, 243  
 Madrid, 249  
 Magdala, 3, 45, 281, 285  
 Maginot Line, 269  
 Mahableshwar, 30, 55  
 Malabar, 106  
 Malaya, 147  
 Malcolm, Sir John, 83  
 Malta, 33  
 • Manchuria, 275  
 Marx, Karl, 259  
 Maurois, André, 195  
 Mazagaon, 149, 195  
 Meerut Trial, 236, 237  
 Mehta, Sir P., 9  
 Mesopotamian Campaign, 4, 193  
 Metcalfe, Charles, 198  
 Metternich, Prince, 248  
 Middleton, Thomas, 261  
 Mill, John Stuart, 111, 164, 166, 236  
 Miller, E., 62  
 Milner, Lord, 196  
 Milton, John, 240  
 Minto, Lord, 20, 150  
 Mody, Sir H. P., 177  
 Mohan Roy, Ram, 152  
 Montagu, Edwin Samuel, 4, 5, 7, 9, 17-19, 33, 38, 66, 156, 233  
 Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, 26, 30, 32, 56, 88, 89, 105, 133, 140, 158, 167, 168, 193, 198, 202, 232  
 Montessori, Doctor, 221  
 Morley, Lord, 5, 20, 150  
 Morley-Minto Reforms, 33, 150, 164  
 Morocco, 147  
 Moscow, 254  
 Mussolini, Benito, 147, 156, 157, 208, 207, 221-225, 251, 262, 275-277, 281  
 Mysore, 80, 82, 85-93, 97, 101

## INDEX

- 106, 114, 121, 125, 129, 132-134  
Mysore, Maharajah of, 79-82, 86-93, 111, 112, 114, 120  
Mysore, Nawager Maharani of, 86, 87  
Mysore, Yuvarajah of, 81  
Nadir Shah, 15  
Naidu, Mrs. Sarojini, 43  
Napier, Charles, 131, 224  
Napier of Magdala, Lord, 3, 45, 156, 281, 285  
Napoleon, Emperor, 158, 195, 268  
Naroji, Dadabhoi, 9  
Navy League, 155, 160  
Nawanagar, Jam Saheb of, 131  
Nehru, Jawaharlal, 61, 64, 109, 111, 122, 125, 129, 130, 158, 162, 176, 179, 203, 238-260  
Nehru, Motilal, 35, 126, 162, 168, 169, 239  
Nehru Report, 35, 169  
Newfoundland, 114  
New Zealand, 281, 282  
New York, 57  
Ney, Marshal, 268  
Nicholson, John, 198  
North, Lord, 33  
North-West Frontier, 60, 61, 284  
Ottawa, 281, 283  
Oudh, 117, 118, 122  
Paris, 111, 147, 154, 195, 239, 249, 253  
Patel, Vitalbhai, 9, 38  
Pater, Walter, 242  
Patiala, Maharajah of, 108-110  
Pershad, Sir Kirshan, 106  
Peshawar, 33  
Pitt, William, 195, 199  
Pius the Eleventh, Pope, 221  
Poona, 132, 133, 149  
Porbandar, 124, 130  
Port Said, 221  
Prussia, King of, 137  
Punjab, the, 113, 118, 122, 128, 133, 160, 286  
Purnaya, 83, 85  
Quebec, 57, 63  
Rangoon, 224  
Ranjit Singh, 118, 126  
Reading, Lord, 9-24, 28, 31, 33-35, 38, 52, 57, 65, 103, 104, 109, 113-117, 125, 132, 153, 169-174, 220-223, 232, 233, 242, 260, 273  
Reed, Sir Stanley, 55  
Rhineland, the, 274-276, 279  
Ripon, Lord, 8, 12, 25, 85, 90, 101, 129, 137, 166  
Riza Shah, 158, 228  
Rolland, Romain, 221  
Rome, 200, 221, 223, 225, 279  
Rothermere, Lord, 220  
Round Table Conference, 38, 40-51, 58-64, 93, 104, 113-117, 125, 132, 153, 169-174, 220-223, 232, 233, 242, 260, 273  
Rowlatt Acts, 7, 14  
Royal Empire Society, 189, 196  
Royal Titles Act, 137  
Ruskin, John, 258  
Russia, 239, 240, 250, 254, 261, 271, 275, 284  
Saar Valley, 268, 269, 271, 273  
Saarbrücken, 267, 269, 271, 273  
Saarlouis, 268  
St. James's Palace, 43, 59, 175, 218  
Salisbury, 3rd Marquess of, 58  
Salisbury, 4th Marquess of, 64  
San Francisco, 256, 281  
Sandhurst, 112, 192  
Sandringham, 112, 116, 196  
Sankey, Lord, 172, 176  
Sapru, Sir Tej Bahadur, 23, 35, 36, 113, 125, 126, 153, 161-178, 220  
Sarreguemines, 274  
Satara, 118  
Seattle, 281  
Sèvres, Treaty of, 7, 16  
Shahzada, Begum, 149, 150  
Shaw, Bernard, 220  
Shore, Sir John, 185  
Simla, 5, 29, 34, 58, 66, 102, 103,

# INDEX

- 139, 154, 162, 169, 193, 199, 243  
 Simon, Sir John, 32, 35, 36, 39, 44, 161, 162, 168, 172, 176  
 Sir John Commission, 41, 167, 168, 273  
 Sind, 60, 131-133  
 Singapore, 281, 284  
 Sinha, Lord, 6  
 Slade, Miss M., 221  
 Smuts, General, 14, 212, 214  
 South Africa, 14, 125, 197, 214, 246, 281, 282  
 Spanish Civil War, 279  
 Spengler, O., 245  
 Spichen, 270  
 Srinagar, 126  
 Sterne, Lawrence, 149  
 Stevens, Thomas, 184  
 Sudan, 227  
 Suez Canal, 276, 277  
 Surat, 178  
  
 Tagore, Rabindranath, 23, 152, 226, 228, 230, 231  
 Taj Mahal, 142  
 Thakurdas, Sir P., 177  
 Thompson, Edward, 222  
 Thorbeck, Dr., 197  
 Tibet, 3  
 Tilak, B. G., 6  
*Times*, 196  
*Times of India*, 55, 108  
 Tipu Sultan, 83-85, 88, 91, 92, 98, 106, 137  
 Transvaal, 224  
 Travancore, 121, 133, 134  
 Turkey, 3  
  
 Udaipur, Maharana of, 74, 115, 118  
 United Provinces, 61, 133, 242, 244, 252  
 United States, 256, 280, 281, 283  
  
 Valera, Eamon de, 63, 73, 274, 278, 282, 283  
 Vancouver, 281  
 Vayo, Señor Alvarez del, 148  
  
 Venizelos, E., 18  
 Versailles, 97, 98, 112  
 Versailles, Treaty of, 7, 55, 111, 153, 228, 274  
 Victoria, 281  
 Victoria, Queen, 13, 36, 67, 71, 100, 110, 114, 136, 137, 150, 185-187, 195  
 Vienna, 239, 253  
 Vizianagram, 97  
 Voltaire, 15  
 Vpadyaya, Bhawani Charan Banerji, 208  
  
 Wardha, 234, 236  
 Washington, 57, 281, 283  
 Waterloo, Battle of, 158  
 Wellesley, Arthur, Duke of Wellington, 65, 84, 85, 158, 198  
 Wellesley, Richard, 8, 10, 84, 85, 91, 92, 98, 99, 101, 112  
 Wembley, 20  
 Wentworth, Thomas, 72, 73, 142  
 Wesley, John, 237  
 Westminster, Statute of, 196  
 White Paper, 69, 70, 245  
 Wilde, Oscar, 242  
 Wilhelm, Kaiser, 150  
 William the Third, King, 70  
 William the Fourth, King, 190, 203  
 Willingdon, Lady, 57, 65  
 Willingdon, Lord, 53, 54, 56, 58-65, 68, 136, 173, 212, 235, 243  
 Wilson, Woodrow, 268  
 Windsor, 84, 91, 98, 137, 138  
 Windsor, Duke of (see Edward the Eighth, King)  
 Winterton, Lord, 20  
 Wissembourg, 274  
  
 Yokohama, 256  
 Yugoslavia, 240  
  
 Zanzibar, 160  
 Zetland, Lord, 201  
 Zulu Rebellion, 214

